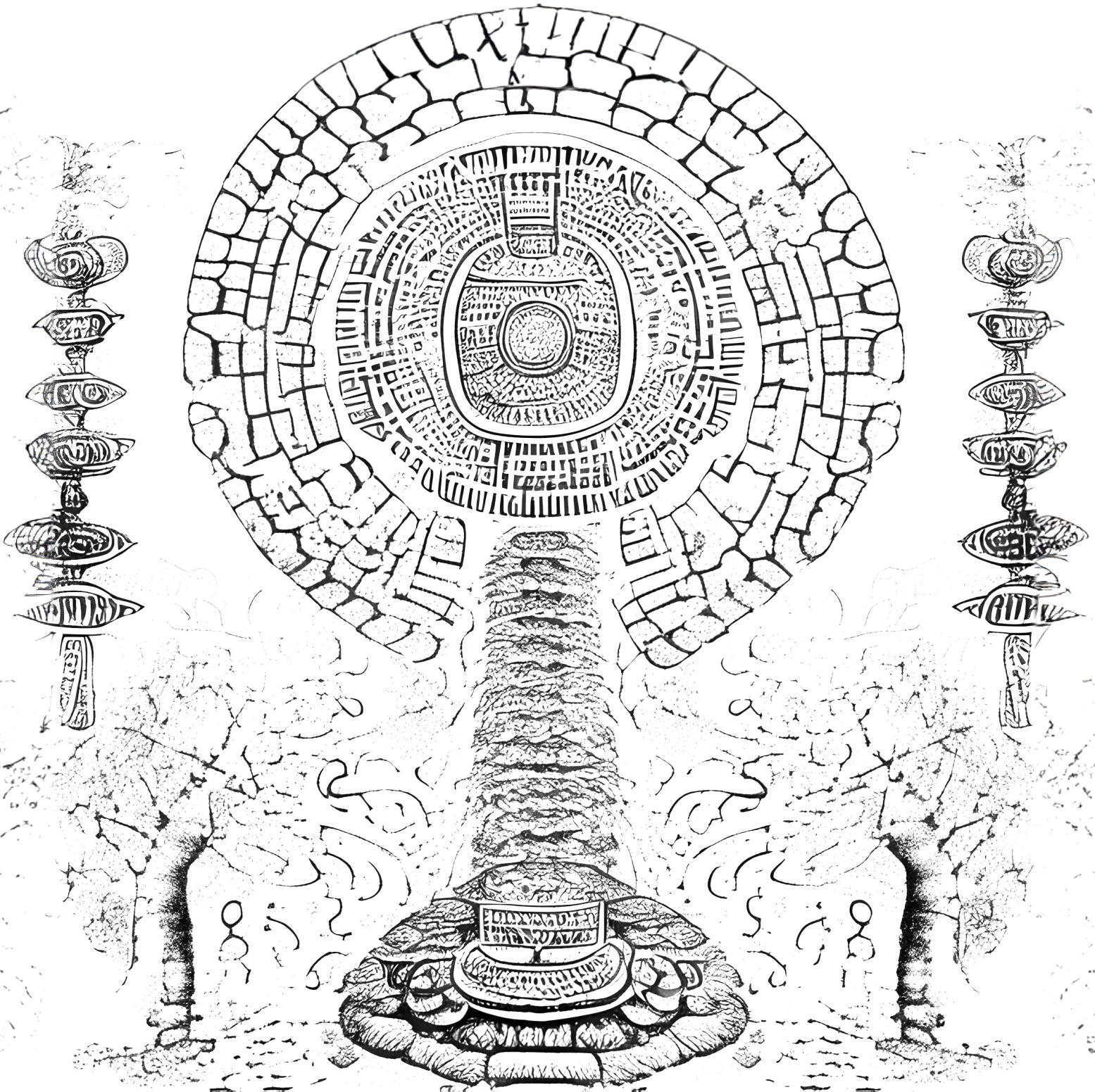


GESTURES OF PERCEPTION



GESTURES OF PERCEPTION

Words & Images By Khôra

The pronounced oscillatory rhythms of the human heart, brain, and lungs vectorize the interwoven electromagnetic, chemical, and mechanical complexes of biophysical realities. The body's metabolic pathways and signal transduction enabled by the voltage gradients and action potentials of cells dynamically entrain us to variegated, fluctuating worlds of perception; electrical propagation, chemical reaction, resonance, interfacial vibration, temperature, and light are only a handful of the numerous descriptive modes which collectively model transient energy exchange in its variety of presentations from endogenous and exogenous stimuli. The mystic awakens to discover themselves experientially enmeshed in this subtle network of energetic trade routes and, cognizant of the simultaneous power and impoverishment of naming, collapses all modalities of the absorption and release of energy into a single complex chain of creation. In so doing, mystical thinking reveals its desire and capacity to overcome ensnarement in this linear chain to more fully participate in freedom, fruitfully bypassing the anatomical terminologies of science and grasping the pneumatic and pendular actions of the pulse and respiration as intrinsically bound up with mythical origins and destiny, intuiting the fractal structure of vitality stemming from the initial withdrawal of the infinite from its undifferentiated self-containment to instantiate a vibratory space for the evolutionary play and conscious realization of its finite attributes. Mystical thought-forms penetrate beyond mechanics and surfaces to reify the resonant meaning of formal characteristics, affirming the constitutive paradox of immanence and transcendence by demonstrating that the limited and the limitless are dual aspects of a unitary phenomena; the *fiat lux* of the universe and the electrochemical change of neuronal energy propagating along axon and dendrite channels in the brain are the same act, the creation of a world. This image of a recursive, self-similar reality is nicely posed in the Lurianic lineage of Kabbalism's conception of *tzimtzum*, the primal contraction of a boundless light or unlimited God to open space for a cosmic emanation whose nature will share in the form of the vital and originary impulse. This archetypal countenance of reality under the aspects of withdrawal, veiling, or self-sacrifice, where absence enables presence, is expressed on the human plane in the characters of the mystic, shaman, or hermit artist, which is to say — any being who mirrors this act of withdrawal or has taken time to reflect and orient themselves internally in the service of effecting a desired order or external result is redramatizing a primordial act of creation.

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Fusing philosophic, alchemical, and shamanic orientations as maps for exploring initiatic perception, time, and myth through vibration and symbol, *khôra* aims to transmit itself from anomalous realms, broadcasting from thresholds between worlds. Poised vigilance toward inner and outer manifestations and their oneiric synchronies is central to such agency, tracing plaited paths of self-perception which tread through the subtle and gross forces permeating existence. As one of many beings committed to guardianship of a shamanically and magically inflected heritage of creation, *khôra*'s worlds are technologies of balance and concatenation directed towards the revelation that existence itself - understood as the emanation of infinite being through the prism of becoming and descent of unmanifest force into form - furnishes and incites creative desire and so engenders art-life through both the morphogenetic and evolutionary processes symptomatic of extensive materialist history as well as participation in a placeless, mythic impulse that is the intensive radix of all energy. The autonomous and emergent processes of reality occurring on mineralogical, botanical, animal, human, and levels of sophistication beyond are all aspects of a shared matrix or geometry of consciousness whose basic operation can be understood through the principles of reactivity and affinity - the seemingly inert mineral matrix, for example, while generally not considered to be "alive" in the modern world, is atomically and molecularly mobile and thus vibrationally poised for chemical affinity or mechanical reaction (piezoelectricity in quartz for example) to certain types of geologic, cosmic, or laboratory events in its distinctive mode of intelligence. This is to say nothing of the mineral's position as an indispensable element of more composite systems through its uptake from the soil by plants and subsequent incorporation into the cellular make-up of humans and animals by way of food saturated with the vibrational intelligences of light, water, air, and nutrient-rich earth. The measure of control an entity can exhibit in the way in which it reacts or does not react to stimuli is on one level an indexical property of its degree of consciousness, the double-edged blade of its unique cast of freedom. The mystic aims to progressively expand this domain of freedom through refusal to entertain the basic tendencies of human reality via the suspension of breathing, fixation of psychomental stirrings, and steady posture, known as *pranayama*, *ekagrata*, and *asana* respectively in the tradition of yoga. Through its collaboration in the renewal of a structure of sacred temporality by way of congruence with genesis unending, human consciousness regains heightened reality, that is, it sees everything as of its own kind and thus attains constructive interference with its ever-present root. While direct observation and anthropological surveys of the sacred show this mode of time to be undeniably constrained to the repetition of eternal archetypes or models of action articulated by foundational myths, this type of consciousness is one of great aspect since it stubbornly resists entry into history and, through the *interface of ritual* (works directed at entrainment and trance through the rhythmic and intensive repetition of words, sounds, and gestures), unveils the *mise en abyme dimension of identity*, participating in timeless mysteries which leech into integral communal meaning.

The realities of the eternal and the historical, being a unity of energy never conquered by words but diversely experienced and described, depend on the aspect and station of the perceiver — whenever we foreground the unfolding of imageless difference instead of recurrences of archetypal sameness in our ontologies, eternity, like an octopus dreaming or the iridescence of a peacock's feathers (the *cauda pavonis* in alchemy), shows its prismatic face of time as historical evolution.

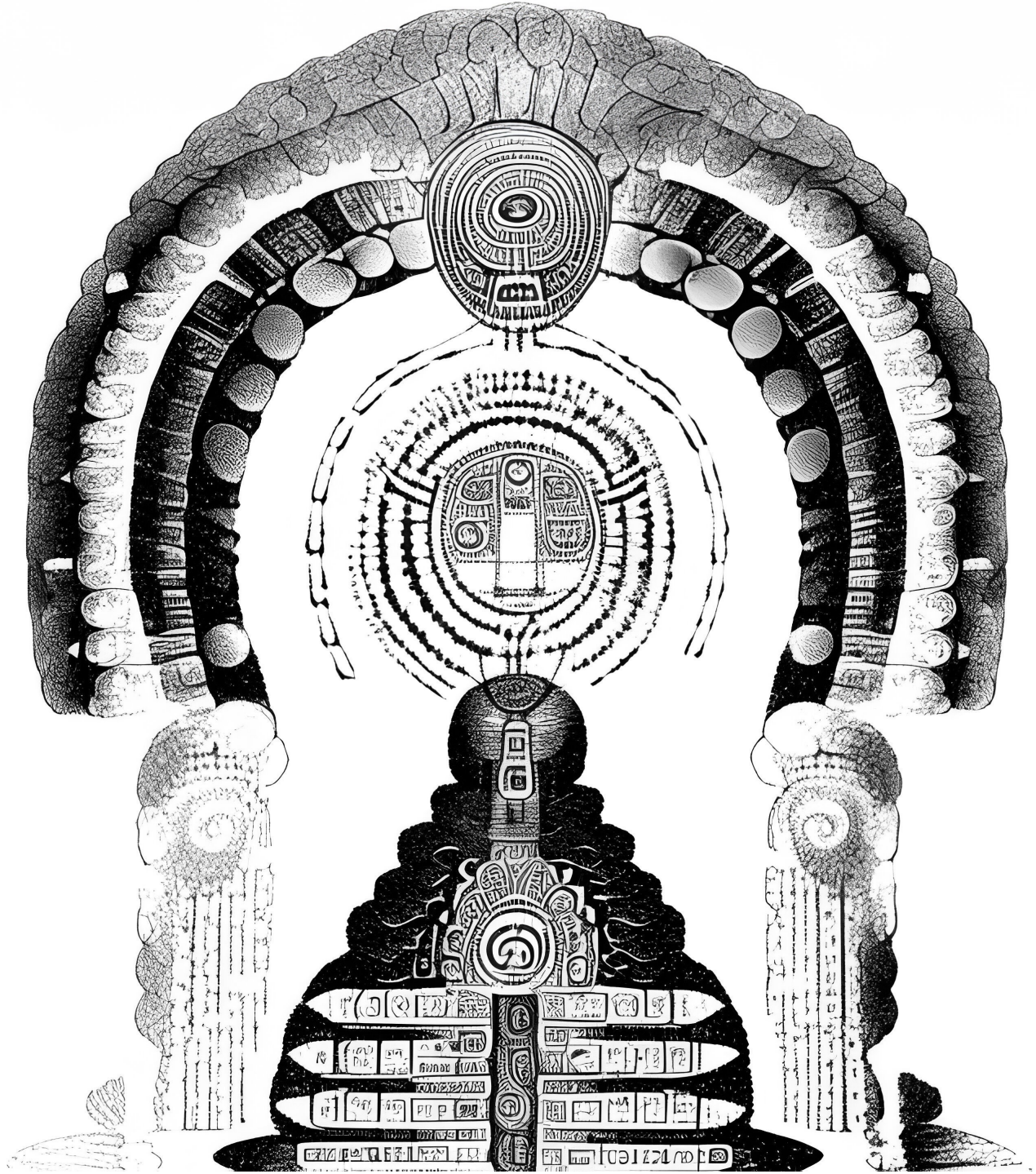
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Through an art of subtle correspondences revealed on the inner planes, the shaman-artist holds the threshold of opposites between order and chaos, arcs from subconscious, larval domains of awareness into neoteric but entangled regimes of meaning, manoeuvring through numerous time-scales and between two distinct qualities of time: 1) a cyclical and renewable periodicity known as eternity wherein behaviours ritualistically trace primeval gestures explicated in myth to attain their efficacy through identity – time here makes its imprint felt biologically but not ideationally, and 2) a linear structure of history, marked by the phenomena of emergence with apparent beginnings and endings, a series of acts which take the unfoldment of traceable history as a model and persist through the repetition of ontological differences, forcing intelligence into a mode of relative comparison made possible through memory. The endeavour and effect of straddling this bifurcating reality of time, encapsulated in the anthropological distinction between modern (profane) and archaic (sacred) modes of temporality, has shadings of what are known in the lexicon of science as *indeterminacy* and *uncertainty*. Quantum physics uses these words to indicate the incapacity of a perceiver to simultaneously access what are, harkening to the thought-forms of the alchemical tradition, called *complementary* aspects of a system (position vs momentum or wave vs particle duality, for example), where clarity concerning one datum implies obscurity of another. From the point of view of rational thought, there is a similar experiential pattern with respect to the foregoing constructions of time — one may seemingly oscillate between but cannot simultaneously grasp the temporal realities of eternity and history as insight into one domain darkens access to the other. This reciprocated movement from clarity to obscurity, from being constricted by to being free of time, partakes in a fundamental quality and ambiguity of reality which serves as a propulsive engine at the root of being and implies the circularity of transmutations. Historical time tends to view eternity as an illusory analog of a notional infinity, a conceptual blunt instrument that occludes or displaces the nuances and complexity of concrete particulars in favour of the repetition of an abstract archetype. Such a form of myopism is equally manifest, though inverted, when we fixate granularly upon the interminable and nebulous evolution of the historical thicket, since we cannot grasp the holistic meaning or telic orientation of the eternal whole when our attention is fastened

upon an ephemeral fragment – that is, until we grow to glimpse the macro universe itself, its morphic signatures and puzzled tessellations, in the microcosmic shard. In deference to the alchemical notion of the *coniunctio* and the related *coincidentia oppositorum* or unity of opposites, these apparently distinct but overlapping realities of time must be teased out mystically and stereographically integrated, combining the two images into a brazen and lucid vision of depth which explodes choice such that *history's chimeric mutations become the looking-glass for the reveries of eternity's stasis, the dream and mirror being the double articulation of a nameless point-source*. Within this context of seeing the common origin of art and life as the repetition of both an archetypal and an imageless process which merge to produce self-awareness, affirming the symbiosis, dividing cellular matter, and thermodynamics of the asymmetrical arrow of time while restoring the witness to the primeval breath of the first day, the shaman-artist pursues transpersonal dynamisms and the overcoming of culturally appreciable identity and pedigree. Aping the hermetic withdrawal and veritable transparency of the structure of genesis to commune with spirits at the limen of dimensionality, the shaman-artist ideally becomes a gate or gesture through which the resonant energies of the universe perpetuate, toiling playfully but measuredly to reinstate and restate art's mystical relevance and mission as a crucible for extending the freedoms and intensifying the vital awareness of the processive actualization of embodied life.

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In a restlessly communicative and mystical ecology where everything is not only touching in dispersed circulation but functionally interwoven and identical, the perception of a world inheres in the station of the perceiver as much as the objective ordering of matter. It is not the experience of sense impressions or the concourse of connected contents of thought that the shaman-artist pursues in turning attention inward and away from the explicate world since this will merely preserve them in a meagre sense of self. Rather, they seek the *sun door* (the inner spiritual flame) and total freedom from mundane conditioning through an experience of the self-reflexive activity of mind in abeyant time, eternally awakened consciousness emptily perched on the crease of awareness before the ego, further down the line of mirrors, takes a hold of the gesture as one of its own inventions, throwing magical perception into a cage of “reality”. Through submission to radical unity and the process of solarization wherein there is identification with the central spiritual fire under the action of trance, the doors of the shaman-artist's psyche are blown open as they tunnel into the matrix of time, unlock the ancestral source of light within, and share it compassionately with their community; this act of sharing is not one governed by heroic or noble choice but is a natural byproduct of attaining such a station and remaining integrated, if only at the boundary, with the society. By condensing and expanding their sense of selfhood, the shaman-artist leaves the body and stands over the



multi-dimensional phenomenon of time, adorning themselves in a simultaneity of differing psychological states and the wisdom of multiple worlds. Just as we stare backward into the past when we peer out into the night sky, absorbing ourselves in the presence of ghostly apparitions, the shells and echoes of light cast from long vanished stars and galaxies, the entire universe inclusive of the human realm becomes such a series of spectral images frozen in time for the shaman-artist. It is through this mechanism that the

potential remedial actions of their craft can occur – once the universe has been transfigured into an apparitional play of radiated light, healing becomes a matter of passing into transpersonal realms and reallocating balances in alliance with spirits or abstract forces, seizing time kairotically from a higher-dimensionality, and projecting and seducing the image of the ailing subject towards wholeness, to a psychological and physical state which is no longer congruent with fragmented conditions or the contours of illness. Practiced from this lofty standpoint, shamanic art is a grounding pole to grip, an abstruse but veritable pursuit of love and thereby healing through an invitation into the mysteries of shared substance, the manipulation of fire, and the redemption of time. Love, like wisdom, proceeds by discerning affirmation and so callings towards modalities of alterity symbolized by the character of the shaman-artist and their work must not be understood as a negation of the present state of our faculties but as summonings to augment affirmation by continuously unfolding the sphere of the possible.

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Plato's *Timæus*, a philosophical dialogue which presents a cosmogonic myth that is distinctly abstract and geometric, articulating a rational and purposive movement from chaos to order, is the scene of *khôra*'s first historical appearance. In colloquial Greek, *khôra* is still commonly used to refer to space or place, encompassing meanings such as territory, boundary, town, and the region between two limits; in Tibetan Buddhism, *kora* (one of its many homonyms through transliteration) means *revolution* signifying a meditation or pilgrimage enacted through the clockwise circumambulation of a sacred site in various displays of prostration and reverence; in the origin myth described in *Timæus*, it is only spoken of obliquely in the metaphors of a mother and matrix, a receptacle of archetypal forms and a womb, something which receives all without becoming anything. While invoking a separate demiurgic force which gives form to cosmic creation, through the nebulous concept of *khôra*, Plato is able to point to the strain upon conceptualization and the natural antinomies that arise when thought attempts to apprehend the infinite, delineate a path of causality back to its remote origin, or image a placeless place. In opposition to the image of the paternalistic demiurge who instantiates order, *khôra* appears as the chaotic and abyssal void, the feminine celestial sea, at first seeming to simply reconstitute a terrain of base polarity at the level of the primordial. But Plato is sure to wrest *khôra* from its ensnarement in a common oppositional pair with the demiurge by making it clear that it cannot simply be said to dwell in being or non-being, cannot accord with the ordered cosmos or with chaos, with before or after creation, process or product, and so is referred to as "*triton genos*" or third kind – that which is fully other. To a certain extent, the fuzziness and intermediate nature of *khôra* and the manner of thinking by which it must be approached already anticipates the quantum physical notion of

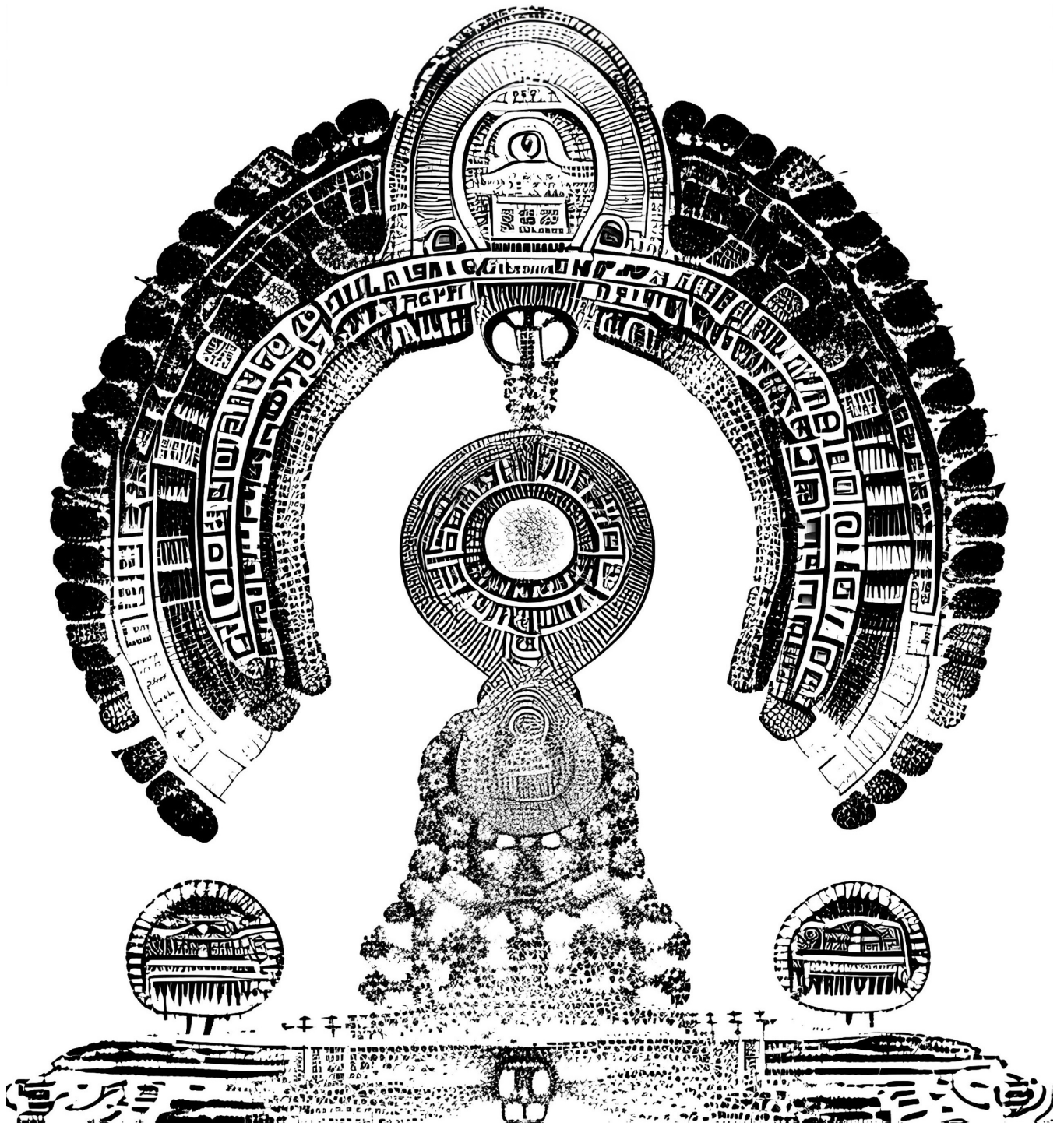
superposition, where a reality prior to observation or measurement must be imagined to be in two or more states simultaneously, à la Schrodinger's cat. It is this mystical dynamic, this indeterminacy as provocation, this displacement of a name from the terrain of semantic meaning and restoration as a mantric sound that is entrancing and beautifully apt as a structural analogue for the shaman-artist, their liminal practices and historical predicament: a struggle and passage through identity in the context of questions of freedom, origins, time, and the nature and limits of the mind/body.

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As a mythological and equivocal entity which endlessly bifurcates and routes itself through both materiality and the metaphysical, *khôra* is immanently revelatory, not through any promise or alliance with this or that worldview or philosophy but through its formal, metaphoric properties and its turbulent meaning which refuses restraint. A metaphor is capable of speaking between terms, translating into language correspondences to which words and grammar are blind, unearthing experiences' unnamed nuances and aligning us with the axis of interpretation. Semiotically, metaphor is defined as a complex sign embodying two distinct $x=y$ relations. The first relation consists of the topic and the vehicle, where the former suffices to be the x and the latter the y ; "the eyes are windows" where "eyes" are the x or topic and "windows" are the y or vehicle. The second $x=y$ relation is discovered within the vehicle itself where the y of the original relation is a connotative symbol, i.e. windows are portals to other worlds, can symbolize openness, transparency, vulnerability, or a limiting frame. The connotative signifier harbours the resonant or poetic aspect of metaphor, providing the imagistic relation with figurative depth and distinguishing it from mere analogy. However, the original $x=y$ relation only suffices to be a metaphorical statement if it is also true that x does not equal y . If x does not equal y is not implied then there can be no distance between the metaphor's terms to allow the colours and associative complexes of imagination to enter, there is no "carrying beyond" (meta-over, beyond and pherein- to carry, bear) and so the expression would simply be a direct or literal one. The x does not equal y tells us where to "look" conceptually for the metaphor's unique resonance while the x equals y informs us as to what the metaphorical relation means and anchors the subject of communication. Insofar as it has no concrete referent but is invoked in Plato's dialogue as an abstract limit space which receives all without becoming anything, neither the source nor the result of creation but an ineffable between, *khôra* is both the x and y of a metaphorical expression pointing to consciousness, a fragile symbol of that which has an impenetrable and shifting relation to itself. Through the provocation and exotic contemplation of *khôra*, we are led beyond words into voiceless mystery, comparing that which has no clear meaning with that which has no explicit content, left to simply ponder our own curious acts of creative perception and understanding beneath its beguiling invocation.

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Khôra is a florid gaze bridging actuality and virtuality, serving as the spectral and ghostly channel between them; it is an arcane talisman inducing acts of centring upon a nameless location of origin-resolution which is ever-present. If one can learn to settle in this enigmatic and meditative space and divest oneself of the superfluities of selfhood or, failing that, can learn to comport oneself with patient openness toward any individual who has learned to identify themselves not with arbitrary contents of the mind as obtained through the senses but with the adamantine plane, the unspeakable vastness of descent, then one will find that the nature of such a voice and vantage point is not expressive of a repository of memory accumulated through the linearity of a single lifetime. Rather, the feeling of resonant, hyperdimensionality that accompanies words issued from such a location results from the fact that the voice has been harmonically linked to an active and clear perception of the entire universe and its nested planes, dimensions, and timelines actively transpiring within. To provoke witnesses into such a state, the concept of *khôra* circulates through and beyond the continuum of explicate life, hovering above the karmic accumulation of acts like the reference beam of a hologram untainted by interactions with other energy structures and so, like some curious *clavis aurea*, able to reproject the casing of light or waveprint of a life which has been modulated by experience and historical duration, the signal or object beam of the hologram. *Khôra* is a call of fire to the spirit to penetrate and equilibrate the fields of compulsive distortion accreting upon the localized, enculturated personality to revivify the life process and functions as a perplexing residue embedded in the densifications of material complexity, a stubborn reminder of the implicate realms and missionary intentions that subtend the vagaries of the dice throw of a life. From the perspective of discrete energy, the centring alignment induced by *khôra* can be poetically stylized as akin to a conscious refusal of quantum collapse, an awareness that remains within nameless matter-waves instead of dispersed among a world of discontinuous objects. Similar states of unitary consciousness may be generated by various traditional, occult, or creative techniques, for example, by finding a mantra which, through diligent experimentation and practice, sympathetically vibrates the base of one's spine when intoned, thereby activating its entire length by forming a solid rod and conducting a frictionless axis of information. Such an act permits access to the body in its pure geometry as a resonant cylinder with harmonic propensities, ultimately creating a coherent standing wave along the length of the human form in phase synchronization with fundamental or Schumann electromagnetic resonances of the earth-body and producing a state of psychomental superposition. This holographic witness, enrapt in various time scales and the awe of the planetary paths of becoming laid before it, glimpses a transmaterial perception that skirts around the fate of decay that steadfastly appends itself



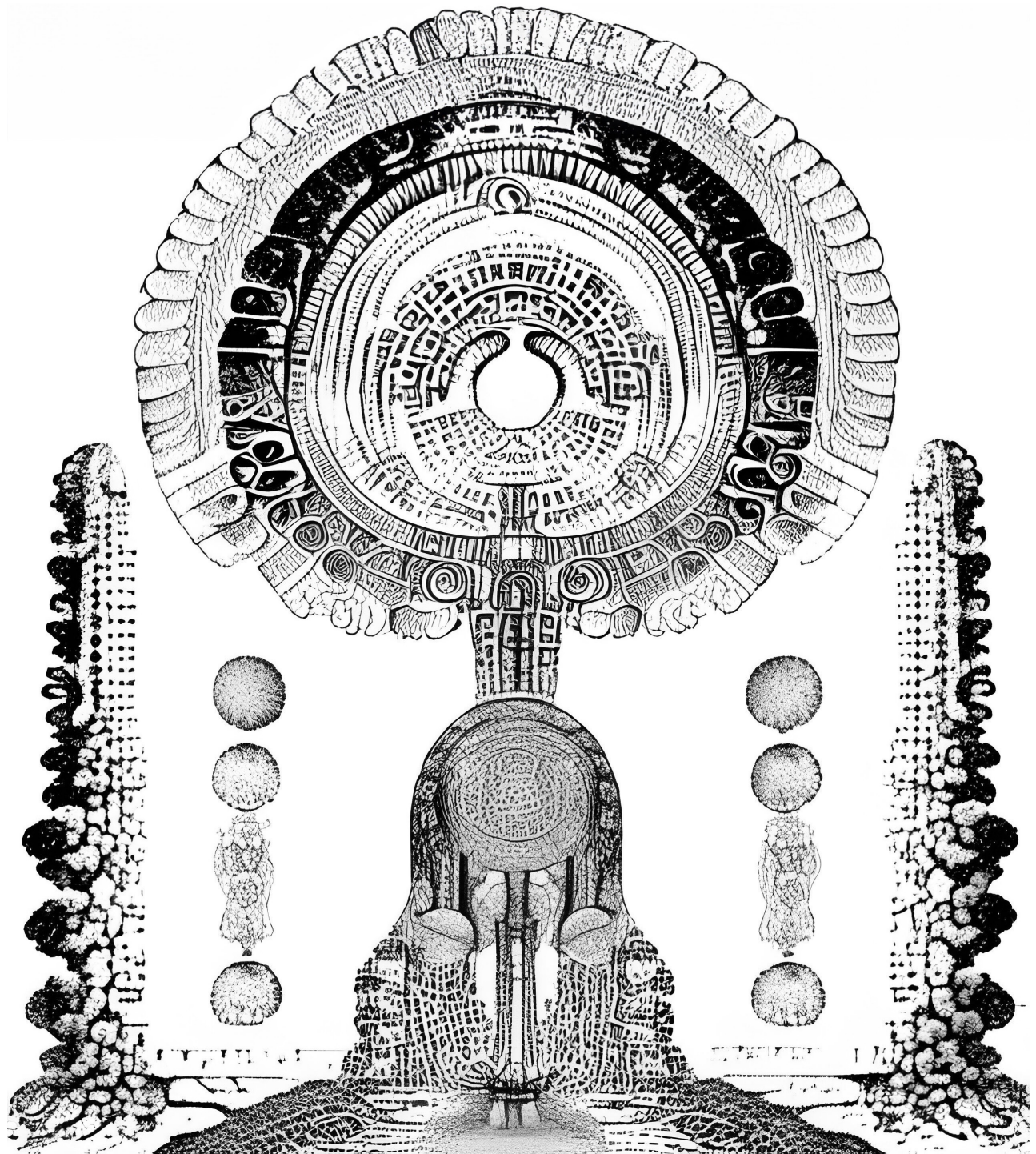
to anything which, tempted from eternity's unbroken wholeness by desire for self-knowledge, for form, pulled into the polarities of the explicated world by the splendour, play, and forgetting of the ephemeral, biases away from unceasing self-recursion towards warring identities with scant and dubious root, ensconced in the narrow registrations of linear history and curtained from timeless source and its teeming virtuality. Such is the quintessential mystical experience, the luminous source of all transcendent striving,

religious binding, and mythology, induced by countless techniques, assured in death, and seldom occasioned by chance. The process of tuning to a mystical register and alchemically purifying the phantasmic manipulations of the personality to enrich and serve cosmic identity, allowing the unimaginable origin to function as our destination and grace is the responsibility we assume when our individuated access to a seemingly transcendental memory-plane clarifies that all matter-energy is alive, minimally intentional, and of univocal substance. As witnesses to this, we become more than our flesh-bounded characters — self-aware nodal patterns in an unfathomable sea of vibratory consciousness, fabling ourselves into all manner of reality as we don and shed our garments of truth, perpetually forgetting such mysteries as we simultaneously struggle to leave traces of this mad awareness trembling among the art and detritus of our lives.

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A dead language is one whose singular aspect of perception has been eroded, lost, or displaced, where human bodies cease to serve as a substrate or bioscaffold for the transmission of its unique vibratory patterning of a world. Even living languages which are still artfully capable of revelation and provide a medium for modes of expression and understanding over a span of time, when decoupled from a certain vigilance and dynamism of the spirit, grow to become a monstrous form of petrified psychological confusion, hovering like an impenetrable cloud above life and leaving it to linger in the cold shadows of revelation. This is perhaps why, in acknowledgment of the fragility and swift perishing of linguistic modes of transmission, the Ancient Egyptian priesthood (the *hem neter* or “servants of the divine”) went to such great lengths in the planning of temples; for these sites, aside from their engineered architectural service as houses of sacred life, were conceived as initiatic texts posed in the durability of stone and constructed to resonantly evoke the creative power of the absolute through direct proportional imitation of the processes of fecundation, expressing the conformity of the culture’s terrestrial situation to the shifting influence of cosmic ambiance. With their occasional asymmetrical axes and statues striding with the left foot forward indicating insight into the creative impulse of movement, Ancient Egyptian temples were built in connection with various astrological, theological, ritual, and symbolic concerns and thus had a determinable lifespan of efficacy. This is specifically demonstrated by evidence showing that particular stone reliefs were deliberately effaced, rather than left to decay, once their symbolic aspect or celestial association with a specific *neter* (god or cosmic function) had reached its term. When temples had become superannuated, select materials from the old temple were excised as “stone seeds” to be used in the new temple construction as a kind of genetic architectural impregnation, demonstrating the ancient culture’s ritualistic disposition toward the collaborative chain of nature, acknowledging the putrefaction of death as essential to the

propagation of new life. Unlike the stone book of the temple, many cultural relics, while instructive on some level, fail to heed or pursue the nuances of their cosmic circumstance and so lead to the eclipsing of the vertical evolutionary path of the spirit which the skeins of Egyptian mythology referred to as *Horian*. This path concerns redemption of the flailing disorientations of ego through the conscious realization of wholeness in the face of divisive antagonism (embodied by the mythic character *Seth*) and congruence with the spiritual witness which, like the apex of a pyramid, gazes down to the numberless incarnations of consciousness appearing in the square of the earth plane below, framed by the four cardinal directions. In the version of the Egyptian myth relevant here, Horus is begotten of magical *Isis* and the disembodied phallus of *Osiris* after dismemberment and scattering by his brother *Seth* who the adult Horus will come to defeat in the restoration of *Ma'at*, the core religious virtue and winged functionary of harmony, truth, balance, moderation, and justice in the ancient land of *Kemet* (Egypt). The proto-christic principle of Horus is one defined by purpose and culmination, the crowning result of alchemical procedure and redemption of fragmentary life through transparency to the unitary world of spirit. Horus, like the fertility god *Min* with whom he is later linked, is also known under his aspect as the ithyphallic *kamutef*, a god who comes into existence self-created as “bull of his mother”, the parthenogenetic self and perhaps a compelling conceptual anticipation of the virgin birth. One occult aspect of this element of *Horian* mythology is said to relate to the geometric canon of proportions at work in Ancient Egyptian art and temple construction, the *canevas* or variable grid of units upon which reliefs or paintings were structured. In the fully grown human being, the genitals generally and approximately divide the total body length in two, formally indicating the fall from unity into the dualizing, sexualizing thrust of material procreation. In contrast, the erect penis of the *kamutef* iconography is didactically located at the site of the umbilical channel whose geometric position in the adult human being with respect to its overall body length is the asymmetrical *golden ratio*. In the study of sacred geometry, the Φ (*phi*) proportion or *golden ratio* explodes its rich, integral, coherent, and multifarious meanings, but for our purposes it is sufficient to note that the principle of asymmetric division in a *phi* ratio is the impulse that the creative dynamics of nature’s multiplicity takes while maintaining a coherent relationship with an original unity, indicating both difference and sameness simultaneously, endless progression and fixed proportion. In contrast to this arcane way of Horus is the exoteric *Osirian* mythology more readily engaged by the religious masses of *Kemet*. Master of nature and lord of silence whose green skin tone is indicative of agricultural fertility, renewal, and the unceasing compost of life and death, *Osiris* points to the gradual quality of recycled time, resurrection from the underworld through the matrix of soil in which all terrestrial essence collaborates. In the standard anthropomorphic iconography, *Osiris*’ lower body is swaddled in the bandages of mummification, connoting fixity, constriction, and the chthonic dimension of his character; temporality



folding at the level of energetic grains of soil, evolutionary transformation via shifting cosmic influx and geologic timescales through pressurization and heat in the crucible of the earth, and the natural digestive processes of mineral, plant, and animal intelligence. The Horian evolutionary path, sculpting these propensities of nature by aligning them with the distilled vision of the eternal witness, is rather concerned with subjecting this Osirian topology to alchemical transmutation. In this context, transmutation can be

understood as a mode of superluminal cunning that accelerates natural geologic processes through various techniques of the separation, purification, and rejoinder of its elements. By translating the transformational strategies of the earth into laboratory, meditative, and somatic techniques, the Horian alchemist accelerates evolutionary processes and exacts transmutation within the athanor of a single lifetime, serving all beings in demonstrating the summit of individual will. The falcon-headed Horus overcomes the divisive antagonism of Seth below and redeems his father Osiris and thus nature's cycles of creation and destruction, shifting into a transtemporal, radiant awareness, and becoming a protector of the pharaoh who is the symbolic incarnation of divinity and earth-bound exemplification of the transformative calling of humanity.

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The various lines of symmetry we discover among physical forms on all scales of nature's explication are a harkening back to the self-rapt, symmetrical unity of premanifest void, making us all expressions of an archaic ordering principle and late pretenders on the scene of the *Zep Tepi* (Ancient Egyptian transliteration of "first occasion"). While the forms of nature often evince axial symmetry, it is their movement on a plane which expresses the asymmetrical and irrational projection of life, the endlessly repeating decimal, the winding and spiralling path which does not intersect with itself. Central to anthropocosmic wisdom, which presents the human form as the microcosmic image of the divine macrocosm, is understanding the living world as a flowering symbol of the birth of time and space itself which progressively arrests infinite functional qualities, each entity caught in its own hall of mirrors and pinioned to reality by its witnesses, demonstrating fidelity to or transcendence of particular archetypal aspects. The abundance of forms and their evolutionary arcs are enabled by an originary act of bifurcation which thrusts singularity of substance through the sieve of desire thereby extruding divergent paths of becoming. If one's experience is that their intuitive consciousness (that in you which operates upon the wisdom of memory undeniably accumulated "prior" to the present life, instinctual or cellular intelligence for example) is a permanent witness of a mystically evolving unity which exceeds particular incarnations or whether one accepts their accrued physical body and its registrations of sense as the existential truth of reality will determine whether identity or difference, unity or multiplicity, transcendence or immanence are treasured and emphasized as principles in one's own ontic-mythology.

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The study of sacred geometry, which aspires to direct the mind back towards an experience of oneness through the contemplation of fixed relationships and the discovery

of recurrent geometrical patterns and proportions in the fabric of nature, substantiates metaphysical and ethical meanings in relation to the planar properties of forms, leading to a mode of intelligence which is akin to memory devoid of intention. In this sense, pursuits in sacred geometry also further the vigilant capacity to remain in dynamic harmony with the mythic, formal dimension of creation, balancing the double articulation of individuation and wholeness. This practice of concentration still has faint echoes resounding in various prominent traditions of the sacred in the modern world; the mass circling of the bodies of hajji pilgrims around the cube of Kaaba in Mecca for example, can be related to the ancient geometrical problem of *squaring the circle*, a proposed technical feat whose metaphysical inflection concerns spiritual striving to fix a relation between the mundane and divine planes, uniting the square of the earth with its four winds and the circle of the heavens representing divine completion and perfection. Even a common and already noted example such as observation of the golden section Φ (phi) constitutes a basic initiation of sorts into the core virtues of this practice of contemplation, demonstrating the incorruptible relationship between fixity of form and dynamism of evolution in that a simple and precise division of a line segment is capable of uniting the three remaindered terms or quantities in a continuously fractal harmony of proportion: the whole line's relation to its longer division is proportionally equal to the longer division's relation to the shorter.

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Our body, unfolded complex of discretely formed functions integrally organized is also, more vertiginously, an esoteric map leading to a primordial scission which instantiates the boundary of time as the condition of our becoming. The breach of time from eternity and knower from known is the paradigmatic act which delineates figures from an unformed, chaotic ground, eliciting the play of complements that define the shape of life, ascent and descent from the shimmering void which holds the centre. The *omphalos* or navel stone in the Ancient Greek polis symbolically and cosmically connected the founding of a city to this munificent source by claiming it as the origin and centre of the world or *axis mundi*. Similarly, the Kabbalistic *Tree of Life* elaborates a model linking humanity at the bottom of the tree in the physical plane of *Malkuth* with the *Ein Sof* (the infinite or unmanifest divinity) at its apex through an understanding of the palimpsestic qualities of the sephirotic emanations and the pathways connecting them. In all such cases, the rites, mythologies, and sacred places of a culture define the map or system of linkages between human life and the formation of the cosmos as it was from time immemorial. To assist in directly grasping the crux of cosmogonic construction, an idealized shape of myths of emergence can be rendered abstractly through some of the simplest elements of 2D plane geometry: a point or circle (figured as the *plenum*, *pleroma*, *monad*, or *void*) is fractured or

ruptured by the straight line (the fiat lux or radiation of first light) producing the evolutionary helix of multiplicative beings. The spirals of certain galaxies, vortices, phyllotaxis in plant growth, and the double helix of genetic coding all hold true to an archetypal movement which is an effect of the dynamic compromise between the radiation of the line and the self-recursion of the circle. While contents and emphasis inevitably vary, the rudimentary elements of cosmogonic myth are traceable across the tapestry of global cultures and, in the nuances of their concrete particulars, serve to establish an orientation among a people for harmonious action in the world by tying human perception to the divine self-revelation or self-sacrifice at the founding of reality, thereby yoking individual and cultural concern to non-local unity through primordial identity. Alignment with the formal characteristics of the myth through flattening evolutionary time into eternal tendencies permits esoteric agents to resonate with the voices and paths of the ancestors and offers a tool of discernment for separating that which is of enduring power and relevance from that which is married to cultural expediency and the transient concerns of the personality. Once observed and understood, these formal qualities of myth define a dynamic spatial meditation that leads to an intensification of the consciousness of the witness who sees themselves as an immanent participant in transcendent essence, neither inside nor outside the world but consubstantial with its matrix.

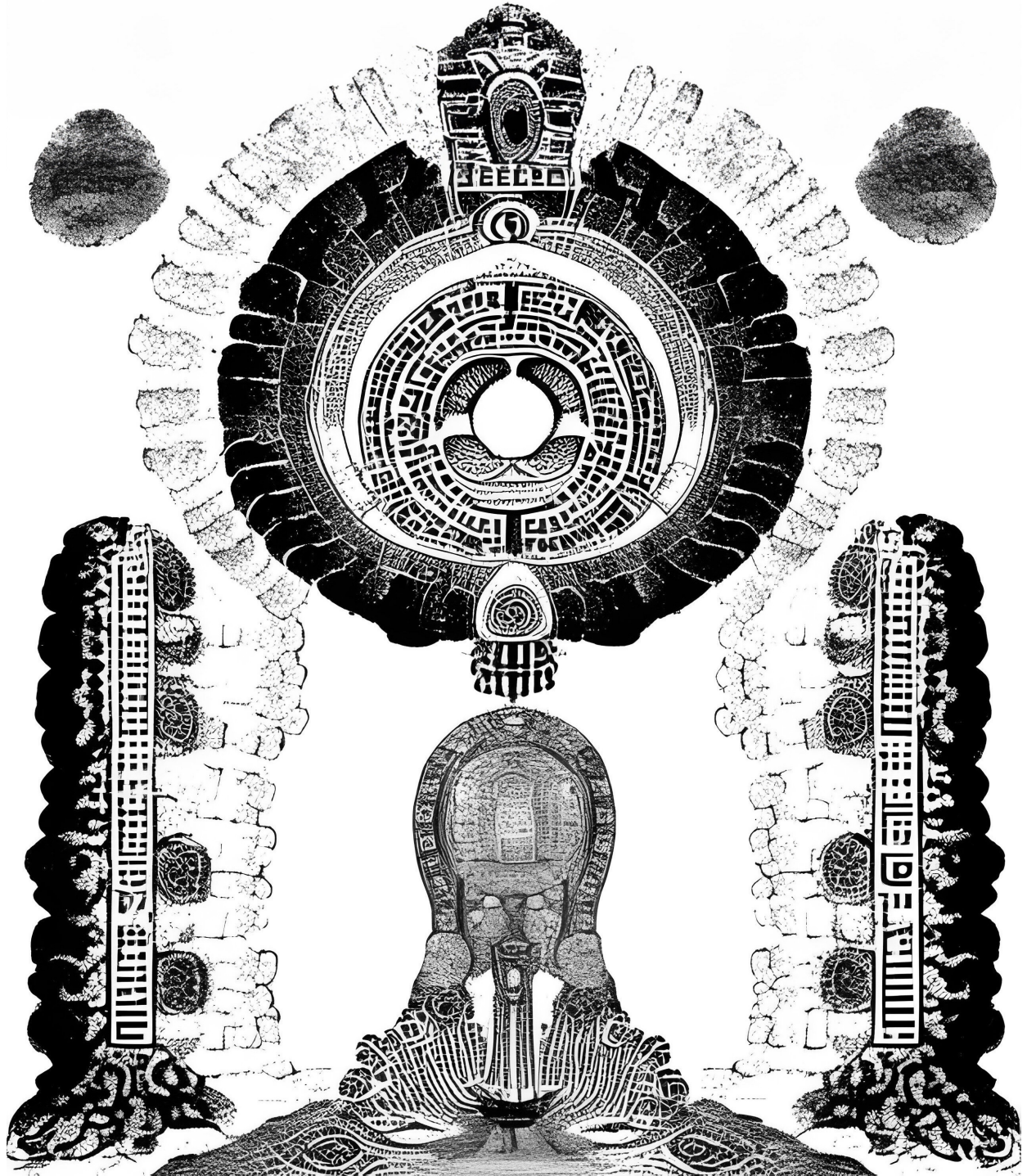
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Music and sound, historically and variously allied with ontology, cosmogony, astronomy, gnosis, and healing through shamanic, religious, and philosophic lineages (Indian, Hebrew, Arabic, Egyptian, Greek, Mesoamerican, etc.) are a common port of entry for higher initiation. As with all initiatory practices, the neophyte approaches the strange aura and emotional latency of the temple of music as a bounded human being, swaddled in trite opinion and lost in meandering labyrinths of paltry cerebral analysis, posing in the barren counterfactual space of private identity. Through the resonant power of affinity, curiosity provoked by the power of musical affects slowly transforms into devotion and it is by this vigilant approach through love that the excesses and deficiencies of the initiate's identity may be planed, their cultural interface ruptured, and they are absorbed in supreme affirmation, translating the rhythmic capacity of separated parts to reintegrate and operate harmoniously with the orientations of the whole, engaging the *solve et coagula* axiom of the alchemical arts with intimations of the Tao. Preparatory technologies of this kind operate under many guises throughout the annals and are essential aspects of evolutionary propulsion, tensioning life by appearing to the mind both as a discovery yet to be made on the horizon of the future, the *eschaton* or *telos*, as much as the exhumation of something deeply hidden in the past, *genesis*, thereby framing the arcanum of the eternal present moment. Functionally, immersion in environmental phenomena and inwardly

cleaving oneself from the attachments which constitute the phantoms and rationalist webs of one's identity is a form of faith that options one to exit the warren of logical analytics and cross the abyss of the self, led steadfastly by the outstretched hand of the mythical ancestor who gladly unspools Ariadne's thread for the willing. In the devotional silence of the void of self we discover ourselves in the lap of the ancestor, the one who is not you and is simultaneously nothing but you, both coinciding in the lattice of emptiness that is light-matter. If you have identified with or fixated upon a particular historical ancestor, this congruence will continue to operate as the boundary, limit, or karma of your identity, for the ancestors serve us through dream and unseen ontic channels just as we serve them in transcending determinations in our acts of genetic expression and creative embodiment, both under the implacable gaze of the indigenous void, the ancient impulse sculpting its spectacle of faces from residual tremblings in ash salts and soil. When the ancestor appears on the inner planes as faceless, both primitive and alien, a symbol for the time before time existed and after its end, then the realm of the sacred, like a dam against the onslaught and flood of history, is restored to its radiance. The thirst for absolute reality, for time absolved by its participation in an event that has already taken place and is thereby released from the toil of change and anticipation, transits both ecstatic and tormented genealogies borne of dependent origination and gathers all realms together through a binding axis or tree of life. Sacred time reclaims a metaphysical centre-circumference concatenating all distributed events and serving as an anchor for the unfoldment of shared meaning amid a timeless dimension. In the mystical coincision of planes, of ancestor spirits overlaid with the frontier of the living, universality becomes the ultimate and final identity of any individual protrusion into life or death.

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Beyond the trance induction available through rhythmic entrainment or hypnotic waves of noise, the harmonic malleability of tonality in particular allows the shaman-artist to sculpt an environment of listening-dreaming that conditions and lures the witness into an esoteric predicament. Cymatics and Pythagorean number mysticism both indicate a fundamental conjunction between geometry, frequency, material properties, and the manifestation of particular visual forms and vibrational modes and the shaman-artist leverages this plexus to alter themselves and their kin. The mathematics of musical harmony, that is, ratios and proportions of oscillatory cycles (Hz) described in terms of numbered quantities and integer multiples, bear upon the specific quality of aural phenomena by way of relative pitch and timbre differentials. Through the Fourier transform - where a complex time domain signal, sound quality or timbre in this case, is understood as a composite of simple sinusoidal functions, oscillations of different frequencies, amplitudes, and phasing - one enters a matrix of spectrality where the clarion



complex of a brass trumpet can phantasmagorically and geometrically mutate into the organic woodiness of a bamboo flute, where slow, disjointed rhythms can be time-compressed to produce sustained, pitched tonality. This moduli or space of transformations overlaps with realms unveiled through shamanic trance and ritual, the world of the living interlaced with the spirits of the dead in a multidimensional phase space transecting and transmuting planes of quality. Thus music, as a joyous learning,

instigator of movement, and contemplation of complex wave dynamics, functions as a parallel mode of description to the universe's effluence of beings (*nada brahma* or "sound is god/all" in Hindu cosmogony), mobile, cosmic angularity and frequency drawing out endless forms of reality like a Helmholtz resonator decomposing and dampening the harmonics of a fundamental tone through subtle changes to its alignments. Conveying the listener into an awareness of this cosmic situation is an idealist craft which aids in the imaging of the body's spectral quality, a calibration of a dimension of one's self as a complex of shifting partial harmonics embedded in the envelope of a fundamental drone called the universe or consciousness. Through the partial's identity as a distributed aspect of the fundamental drone and the reconstitution of the harmonic series on the level of the overtone when taken as a new fundamental, we are led to the perception of a fractal reality that evinces atemporality. This mutating manifold of oscillations conditions the heart's ceaseless murmurations and our capture of reality in the geometrical unfolding of transient, volumetric space, informing our notions of both eternity and historical time, with eternity itself accessed by a meditational or intensive breakthrough of the personality or by walking along a strange and treacherous ridge of faith everywhere surrounded by inflowing mists and the precipice of ignorance. In a seemingly paradoxical formulation, the spiritual heart which defends itself against the incursions, diminutions, and meaning of history and hungers for the intensity and ancestral absolution of archetypal reality, also inwardly desires identity and conformity with death in its irrational but sound thirst to transcend limitation and yoke with the unity of eternal being. Indeed, this is how perception which lives close to the movements of nature vanquishes the affliction and duration attendant to all historical fabric — by assuming rites of rebirth and renewal and knowing itself as an element of a transcendent pattern which includes both life and death. From the perspective of the unitary consciousness of timeless eternity, the fall of virtuality into the actuality of history is itself already coincident with death since it is a donning of a garb of great constriction, the passage from unfettered potentiality to fixity, the partial harmonic both manifested and shrouded in the blooming of the fundamental.

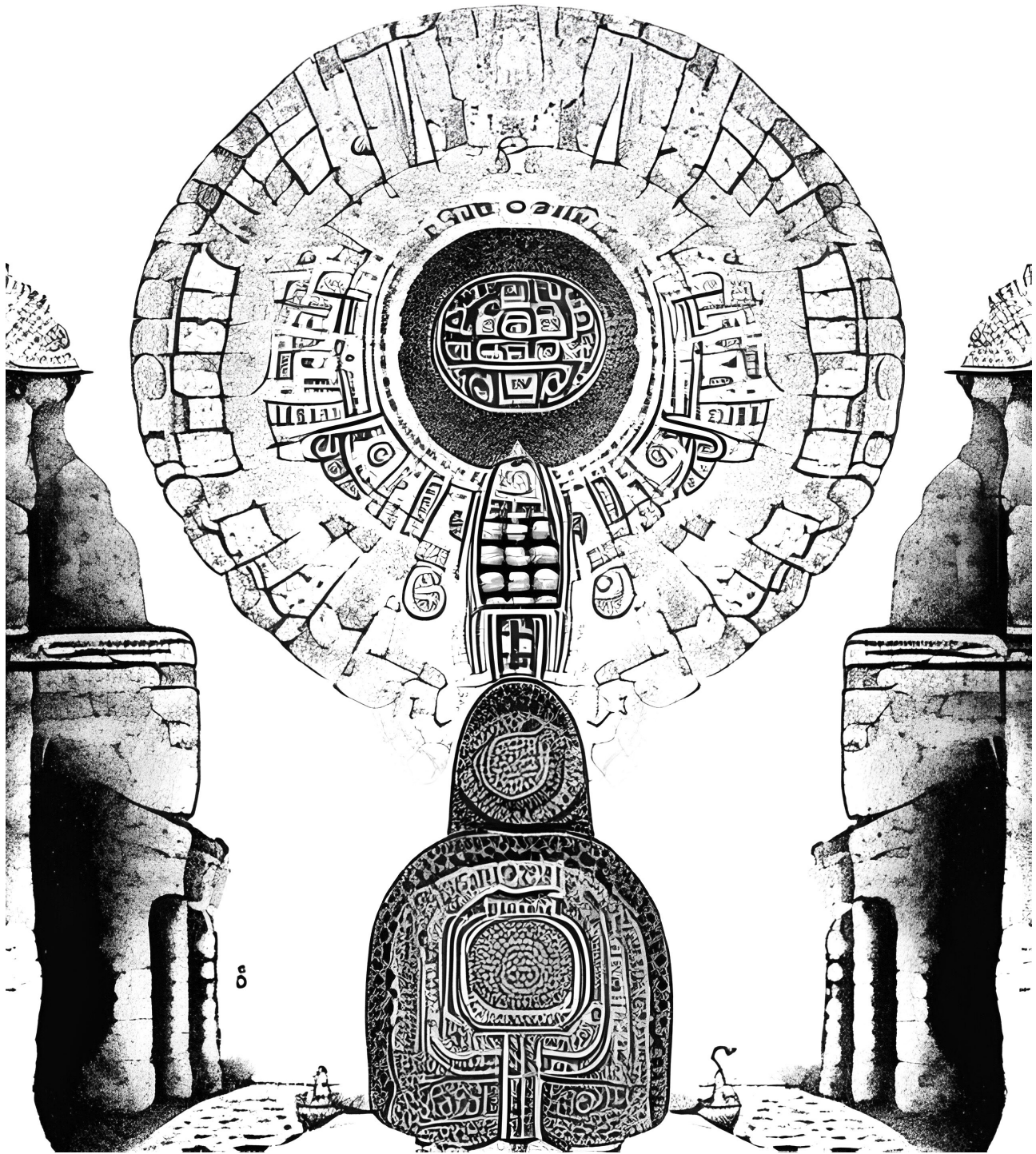
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From a mystical vantage, the trouble with analysis of any kind is that when we dispose ourselves toward a singular entity and bring it under careful inspection it reveals itself to be a mere abstraction in an unseizable process which falls through language's porous hands. Insofar as its stated objective is the decomposition or breaking up of phenomena, no analytical process can arrive at an enduring solution for it will always and forever only incrementally reveal a series of things with more or less well-defined qualities. Every bounded entity capable of being named, irrespective of its scale and nature, is simultaneously a multitude and transient truth, pointing in two directions: to the

beginning and end of time, and so, to the atemporal radiance of existence. It is under such mystical conditions that the listener, perhaps passively, enters the space opened by music, opened by a universe in vibration, opened by observant awareness and suddenly, like something akin to a paranormal encounter, objects lose their hard edges and the listener is in the groundless midst of the unbegotten source of creation — earth, light, wind, and water trembling with an ineffable but undeniably ancient and cosmic intelligence, the incidental human personality shattered in ecstasy for ever having denied itself such a refined garment of truth and community of vibratory spirits. Ontologically, there can be no ephemeral reality, no face that knows it faces itself, no gesture of perception without an act of separation and the anticipatory structure of memory such separation necessitates. Frequencies meshing with frequencies, movement compounded with movement, past and future colocated in a now-moment whose voidness points to eternity; when this experience sediments itself in the witness-come-initiate, the responsibility to modify this architecture of anticipation in the interest of coherence, equilibrium, and integration into a vaster order of unity, peering out not through a rubric of personal memory but through the ourobouric continuum of potentiality, leads to the transfiguration of the universe itself — the fragile body is realized as the light-wrapt symbol of the manifold realms, the whole recapitulated in the part.

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Unmoored from the trappings of static identity, through the adornment of shamanic masks, khôra ideally seduces witnesses into an act of germinal listening where the hallucinatory and synthetic nature of perception itself comes to focus. In the midst of such an experience of kaleidoscopic turbulence, the desire to tessellate, crystallize, and centre upon immutable stability is reawakened, thus activating the spiralling and recursive movement to and away from centre and circumference. Techno-archaic flows, organic and alien texturing, mesmeric drones, patterned interdimensional noises, transplanted field sounds, and simple but articulate melodies coalesce into an esoteric ritual, devoid of sanctimoniousness, transducing the void's holographic architecture, and creating space for the emergence of an experiential unity ensconcing rational paradox in the witness. Like the acts of the shaman-artist, the sounding of khôra does not arise from personal need or desire so much as it is a response to episodic exposure to vibratory intensity and power. The empty body, as if being struck by a bolt of lightning in slow-motion, is sung into procedural action by magical, transpersonal dynamisms. Recordings of these high amplitude moments which animate khôra are ritualistically documented, and, as they occur at dispersed times, form a partial relief of a transmaterial and numinous pattern. Nested wavefronts and textured harmonic flux drape over unstable rhythms to induce the structure of ahistorical creation in the witness, the feeling of something vitally present yet



ever receding, the transmission of an inner warmth. Since a truth can never be more clear than the one who grasps it, whether such work succeeds in its magical aims may only be determined through experimentation on the self since the nature of what is called magic, specifically in its Western psychological aspect, depends on the willed synchronization between internal and external states, opening a channel of transparency and vision through time, seeing under the aspect of something greater than oneself. While presenting an

integral whole, this work is constructed in such a manner that its highest constitution depends on the efforts of the listener, its mystical aspects, should they exist, only freed with the attendant liberation of the witness. Aligning with mythical orientation through the coordination of conscious perception, the esoteric listener enters a state with respect to the music where they cease experiencing an objective, recorded reality and become the responsible source of the quality of their witnessing. The effect of such a meditative procedure adjoining inside and outside is nothing short of a transfiguration and can be had in any kingdom of experience only through a mode of cultivated attention which approaches love. Etymologically, “recording” is a literal placing back into one’s heart and music requests that the listener locate the origin of sound and, further, the origin of creation, in the occulted recesses of their own heart, to become the plenum displaced from void, the receptive chasm which draws the pendulum back and releases the emanation of worlds and harmonic visions of interrelated otherness. Experiments in emptied and extreme attention are the curriculum of the obsessed and mystically oriented and, in a historical civilization which batters beings conscious of their cosmic non-locality into prizing passive belief, material thriving, and the self-deception of limited identity to subdue the pangs of cheapened existence, this focused trance approaching mad love is perhaps improbable, though not impossible. The work is to achieve a station that is vacant but pyretic, beholding sound totems imbued with spiritual fire which reach out to modulate the listener in a register that is more fundamental than the veil of beliefs comprising their transient cultural constructions, thereby inducing healing (basely defined here as “wholeness”) on a more elemental level through conspiracy with the source of our projection. In this manner, music forged in an imaginatively shamanic lineage is an instrument of primordial renewal for it massages the listener into a posture of ecstasy at the joy of listening-manifestation and transmits an eternal and indefatigable state. The spirit in which such practices are conducted – self-administered, psychomental healing solutions transduced into sonorous mandalas – is not concerned with hegemonic social affirmation or the preservation of the subject’s hard-won cultural interface, for the shaman-artist functions as medicine for others by first mending, groping towards understanding, and resolving their own festering wounds, illness, and mental complexes through symbolic acts of dismemberment and rebirth, reattaining wholeness and becoming a dancing fool and sacrificial trickster among the ritual smoke and flames, a compassionate avatar of the planes above and below the earth, *preserving the integrity and harmony not of a single being but of beingness, the incorruptibility of the everlasting fire.* Shamanic musicking opens portals into different registers of experience through manipulating the architecture of time, providing breathing structures and energetic contours that can guide and scaffold inner and outer journeys into the far-near, and is focused on techniques to bypass the rancorous joke of thought so that the unmutated wisdom of the net of being, in its severity, mercy, and balanced precision, can enter to efface us.

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While undeniably a sounding, khôra is moreover a sigil of a silent meditation. It is a cleft or alien glyph masquerading as an impenetrable blockade to deter the faint of heart, like demons or gargoyles perched around the perimeter of a sacred temple. It is a strained pathway that most do not navigate since it is a portal to a realm that ruptures individual consciousness which opposes itself to the universe through thought and attainments, a map of death as much as a cartography of life. The traumas, successes, attachments, and fears associated with your present embodiment are the greatest impediments to grasping yourself as infinite mystery, since these are given enduring substance by the dimension of belief, excluding all evidence which would unfasten their grip on our lives. Beliefs function as a bridge and are thus an indication of a caesura between the one who thinks and the thing that is the object of thought. In whatever guise they take or emotional inflection they are given, beliefs, like models that shroud rather than correspond to reality, ultimately mean temporary limitations of understanding and capacity placed upon the art of perceiving movement and identity with the whole. The disposition to overcome the gap necessitating belief and prevent ignorance from reconstituting itself endlessly in the circuit of life is expounded beautifully and thoroughly in Buddhist insights related to *dependent origination*, ultimately leading outside the endless interrelated linkages of thought into radical identity with the mystical body of universal energy which exceeds conceptions of death and birth. The metempsychotic map of lifetimes, discernment of an impersonal transcendent path through energetic densities and the soils of the earth not by the physical eye but through the loupe of stabilized higher feeling, delivers us from fear to face the phenomena of death while intensifying the character and joy of being alive through the liberation of conscious deeds. Under the sign of this particular shading, khôra functions as an alembic, one dimension of its nature in time, in sound, in illusion, exposed to the fires of transformation which take on emotional and psychical inflection and another aspect, raised above temporal ferment and change and receiving the silent distillate of eternity. In a haze of meanings, khôra slips under the alphabet into the silence of its support, it is a word that bends out of its ambit as a grammatical noun into a cheshire smile gesturing to wordless mystery, a gate out of the conflated and colourful figments of relative perception into an ineffable empty room holding the pangs of creation.

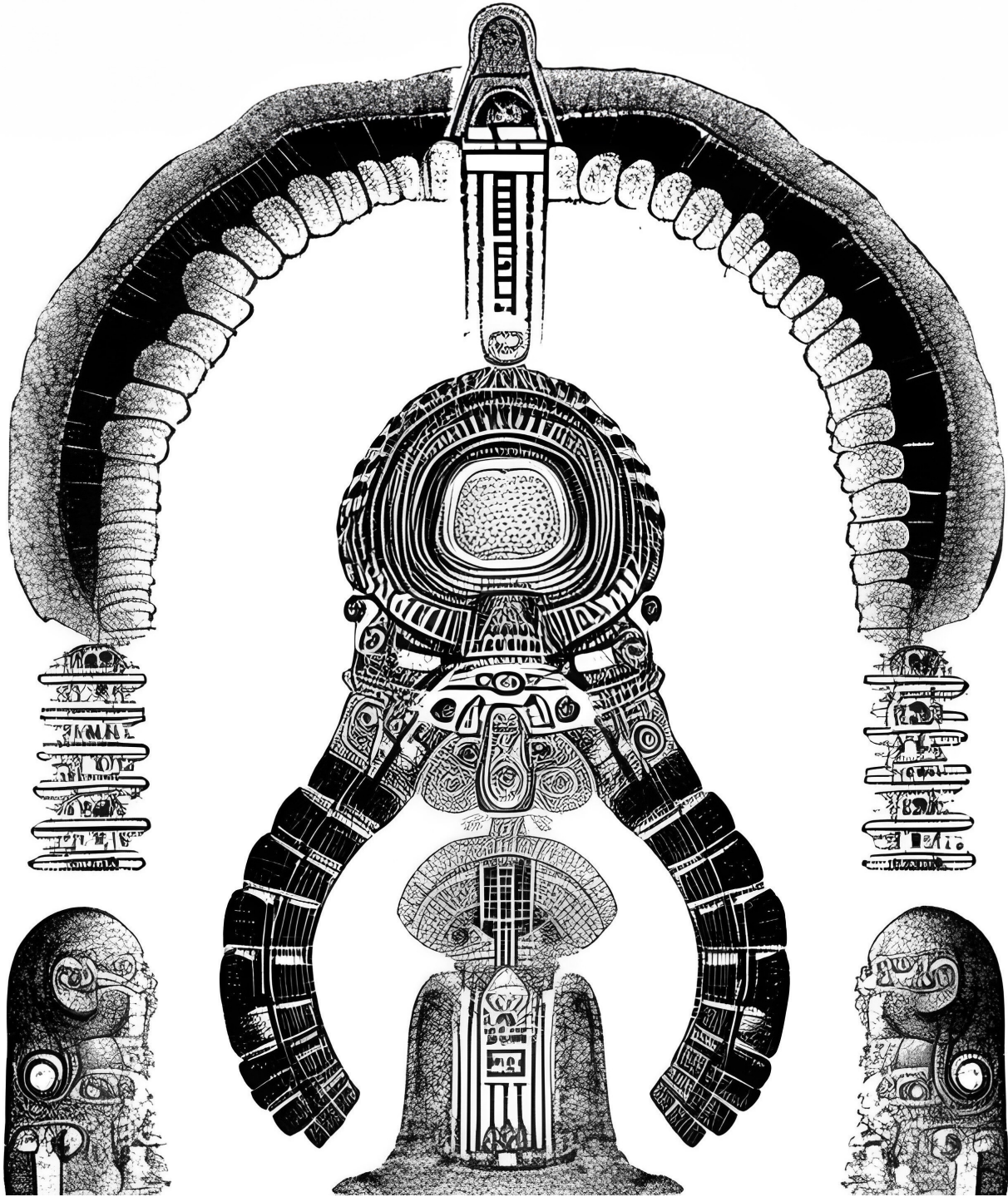
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The worlds beyond our eyes are within the empty room of total energy, full consciousness, bereft of time and location. Transfigured by this vision of the empty room, an image which begets devotion in the form of vivid silent attention, the symbols of our language crystallize and grow diaphanous such that we bear witness to the rarefied forces

which require symbolic formation to transmit understanding. When the beholder merges with the beheld, crystalline and transparent to a larger pattern of energy, becoming language rather than identifying as the source of language, they assume the role of mystical aspirant, superposed to civil life in creative immersion, intuiting that all footpaths are entangled and all experience enmeshed in the wake of the empty room's unlimited point-source. Within the shadows, tessellated drama, and volitional formations of psychological language, unfolding meshwork of words in whose aspects you grasp contours and partial shadings of your discrete ego reflected or distorted, no content can be wholly purged of doubt, everything seemingly interwoven with its opposite. But poised among the unformed spiritual verities of the empty room, sensory activity and the psychomental stirrings of the subconscious mind (or *samskaras*) which are the primary actuators of mental fluidity are halted and sealed lips stand like the edge of a prism breaking the spectrum of silent infinity into heightened meditation and holographic proprioception. Contesting values based upon positional and relative understanding, the fear of death, and styles of life are released and we dissolve into the gap of metaphor which, as already ventured, has the conceptual structure of equating one thing to another while preserving their distinct identities, instructing us in the ways of an elegant form of wisdom — the possibility of identifying without a condition of belonging or identity with infinite escape routes. As soon as the sustain of our silent meditation resolves and the fiery emptiness of the room is once again crowded by the carousel of delimited forms, we differentiate ourselves as the unique beholder of what absorbs us and are irreparably cast into the karma of Babel and the amnesia of the flesh, suffering a puzzle of meaning and thought, assuming a harmonic cast of fate fit to our changing vibratory complexion, plunged into the mythical confusion of tongues, the labyrinth of forgetting and havoc that a language purged of its mystery is, exchanging worn fictions about our redemption of unity by the stone circled fire.

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Accounts of origins taken as a description of an objective event must by their inherent nature appear slippery and obtuse to the rational mind since they are an attempt to use the number 2 to voice the number 1, or rather, to display what is absolute, unitary, and magical using what is relative, multiple, and mundane. As Plato illustratively says of the “all-receptive”, “unshaped”, and “perplexing” *khôra*, in its “granting an abode to all things having generation, [it is] itself to be apprehended with nonsensation, by a sort of bastard reckoning, hardly trustworthy”. One path around such a difficulty and towards congruence with origin is through the practice of perceptual inversion, apprehending the source of what Is not at some spatiotemporal coordinate in the external world but in the occluded action of one's own gaze and grasp, that is, in an imaginal act of consciousness which witnesses, in its



particular quality of registration, its evolution as matter. Through such a reversal, goggling into the world from the space of your skull, you are rather staring into the framework of your own mind, for how could the world and its reality, as lived, be something divided from its root in self-awareness? Although distinctive styles of spiritually-infused expression with a specific quality of intelligence (Zen koan, tantra, tao, hieroglyphics, yoga, Hebrew aleph-bet, pataphysics, etc.) have been advanced by sages of all eras and places to avoid

being trapped in this conceptual dilemma, the paradox of the root is itself insurmountable within a strictly representative language but may be clarified as a living experience through intentional movement and ritual incantation which condition the nerve centres and breath, awakening a character of magical consciousness in the one practicing or, by opening a conduit to the reservoir of energetic wisdom through contemplative silence. It is clear that Egyptian hieroglyphs in particular and other ideographic ancient language classes in general were deployed not only to encapsulate linear narratives by phonetic or logographic means but were rather also intensive encodings of profound internal states and concatenations connected with lived experience, sigilizations fused with divine power and charged with magical perception. Through ritual, sacred architecture, and the hieroglyph's enchanted influence, the priesthood and artists of the temple drew down harmonic forces beyond the pale of sense and measurement into human culture, orienting the society toward the living symbology of the natural environment as a manifestation of the divine, engendering the spiritual experience of identity with cosmos and origin by placing life in wide-eyed contact with the transformative and immortal fire of its unconscious descent. This is precisely why Egypt was known as the mirror of heaven in the ancient world, for their universe was not believed to be divine — it was *experienced* and *lived* as such in all of its aspects. With their incantatory spells, books of the dead (guides for navigating the Duat - the underworld or afterlife - as much as depictions of shamanic operations and apotheosis), and living experience of the mystical quality of language, the magical manifestation of the world experience was certainly not an open question to the Ancient Egyptians. Various hieroglyphic markings are concrete depictions of gestures and creatures that pointed not only to bounded entities and their conjunctive associations but to the overlapping classes of functions to which their identifiable qualities belong and the manifold and organismic interrelationships between them. It has even been proposed that units of measurement (the cubit, for example) used in the construction of cultural artifacts would display variability not arbitrarily but in conformity with the particular nature of the thing that was being measured and built, indicating a highly mobile and sensitive outlook in line with the resonant character of the hieroglyphs. Through such aspects, the culture as a whole betrays a sophisticated aesthetics, science of the spirit, and primitivism, primitivism here implying no form of denigration or romantic oversimplification by a “modern” observer but rather the conscious decision of a people to endure by remaining close to what was felt to be the prime spiritual source of life. While it was indeed variable in certain respects over the span of its documented lifetime, perhaps such dynamic insights and agile relations to the sacred experience of the manifest account for the unfathomable longevity of the culture as a whole and its lasting magnetism and presence in the dimension of mind. The one and the many, pluralism and monism were both perhaps present in the occulted depths and the civilian surface of ancient hieroglyphic language practices, but their attendant modes of magical consciousness have long atrophied with the

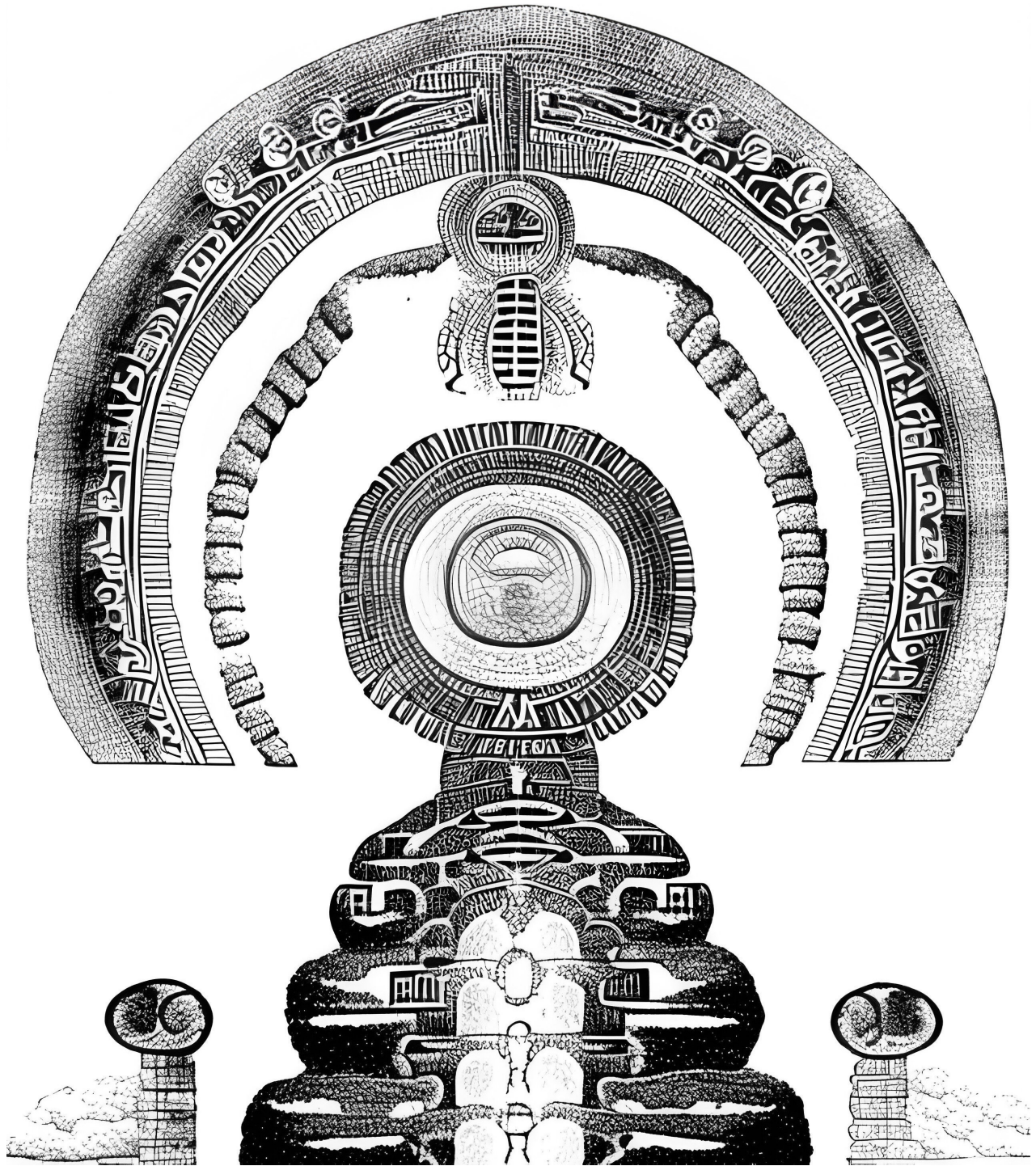
ascendant ballast of materialism and may only be accessed through mystical penetration and hyperdimensional intersection with Egypt not as a geographical or historical place but as an archetypal quality of consciousness whose possibility of resurfacing is eternally present.

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In the quietude of silence, attenuating sensory inputs and tuning into the body's carnal music, the mind radiates presence allowing one to cast aside the subject that would oppose itself to a world that objects and enter directly into an observation of the fulcrum bearing the forked path of self and world. What we call void or vacuum, the no-thing and no-time that is the condition of the entry into history and the polarization of matter, is properly imaged as a self-contained symmetry virtually laden with the restless and shambolic fluctuations of undifferentiated force. Primordial scission sunders light and darkness and a cascade of continuous symmetry-breaking processes enables the fertile void to secrete ontic fields and harmonically related masses, subatomic particles, which fold and accrete to substantiate the various energetic densifications of being, all coherently nested within one another, each new strata of complexity being a support and integral devourer of the one that begets it. The indefinable moment/location between void and the dynamic impulse of radiance which leads to the temporary envelopes of energetic forms we understand as materiality is one clamouring definition of the ungraspable khôra — we are no one but the field, vacant and rife as the haunting question which siphons us from the void of eternity into the cauldron of time. In this connection, as a kind of bardo plane or abstract trace of the place between birth and death, khôra also serves as a tantric, proto-psychological instrument for gnosis and transcendence, a path leading outside of the distributions of time where the foregoing mythic structure is reversed and creation is undone, the descent into multiplicity becoming an ascent of the ladder of the spine, the serpent of kundalini penetrating the roof of the skull — cosmic rebirth into the garden of unity through the power of identity. There can be no real difference between unity and apparent multiplicity on the level of basic energetic existence, there are only differences of vibratory rates under variable conditions which conspire to create conditional, individuated matryoshka planes, enabling the types of folding, accumulation, and inexhaustible variety the cosmos displays, from the high-frequency vibrations of gamma rays, x-rays, and atoms to the singing of bacteria, the orbitals of electrons, or the unrushed pulse of a peaceful heart.

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For the shaman-artist or the creature of mystical aspect, cosmogonic myth does not occur strictly at the dawn of creation but is the model which revitalizes and renews the dying-living through cultural or personal rituals by affirming participation in the wisdom and deeds of the ancestors and transection by a dimension resistant to historical change. Connecting the celestial, mundane, and underworld realms through evoking an *axis mundi*, linking human affairs with divine resonance and chthonic worlds, the ritualized perception of the shaman-artist embodies the interconnectivity of the mystical tree of life, demonstrating that despite the dominance of relativism and the total historical saturation of modern existence, human lives thirsting for contact with the sacred may still poetically forge the centre of the universe within their own horizon of action thereby establishing their magical operations on the level of the great spirits. Since much of contemporary humanity lives in a wholly desacralized world of strictly materialist concern hobbled together with increasingly weak beliefs and conviction, where no personal or communal centre of timeless orientation exists and the cultural openings connecting up to other realms seem resolutely sealed off by psychic fragmentation, political polarization, the hypnotic compulsions of techno-science, and cycles of distraction within the conceits of capital and power, people of mystical inclination who seek invincible reality as a ground for their actions might adopt the fractal recursion that underpins the dynamics of self-awareness or the evocation of the line segment divided in a golden ratio as exemplars which induce the imaginal revelation of the eternal present and its homology with the origins of time. To recapitulate our belaboured mythic armature using nomenclature employed in the Hindu theoretic: at the dawn and culmination of creation, there exists a silent and unmanifest point known as the Bindu. This Bindu serves as the seed source of existence, holding the centre and allowing itself to be known through expression in the complementary and inseparable personified principles of *Shiva* (representing destruction and transformation) and *Shakti* (representing nurturing and sustenance). The primal sound, mystic syllable, or seed annunciation - OM (the natural tone produced by the opening and closing of the mouth) - pours out from this point and opens the gravid void into the pulsing polarity of boundless creation and evolution. Like the numerical and harmonic metaphysics of the Pythagoreans, the Hindu conception takes sound - that is, compressed and rarified air waves, positive and negative arcs from a static equilibrium point - as the central element in the formation of a cosmos. This perception of the analogue between sound and the ordering of a universe, between vibration and the appearance of spacetime, evidenced in the myths and art forms of numerous global cultures, attests to the anthropocosmic manner in which the ancients' saw actions and events on the earth plane as coincident with universal propensities; they recognized that what could not be understood through the wisdom and workings of their own body as a mirror of the cosmos could not be collated through any type of external learning. Perhaps this is the reason returning initiates of the Ancient Greek mysteries at Eleusis were referred to as



épopteia, their word for contemplation, the “op” phoneme indicating an etymological link to the eye (optic) rather than the ear. Advanced initiates who had taken the rite, drunk of the likely psychoactive kykeon concoction, and achieved attainment were not those individuals who were animated by personal quest or compelled to believe in the imaginings of others (for as Simone Weil notes, “the mind is enslaved whenever it accepts connections which it has not itself established”), but rather those who had seen their bodies and the mindstream itself transform

into trembling ontic vibrations coextensive with all existence, collapsing sight into sound, and thus unfolded this mythic relation and mystical contemplation of the body's equivalence to the cosmos in themselves.

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For those inclined to evolve passively or gradually at the speed of the organic composting of forms, the esoteric attitude of accelerated or sudden evolution toward conscious wholeness by a short path, although archaic in its fundament, will surely be met with incredulity. This is not because mysticism or esotericism pitches deliberate concealment or meaningless concepts rather, it speaks more to the inaptitude of rational intelligence and the personhood associated with it to reckon with what is beyond the meagre harvest of the senses. In the indigenous Bön lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, the esoteric ascent of the direct path is known as *chöd*, which means “to sever”. The *sadhana* or spiritual discipline connected to this tradition concerns cutting through ego-clinging by means of various extreme rituals. Initiates of *chöd* leverage the powerful energies associated with fear and attachment to pursue the wisdom that all things, dependently originating, lack essential existence and coalesce in their identity with emptiness. The nomadic practitioner often conducts their rituals in dreadful places and charnel grounds, putting their detachment from ego-identity through trials by entering a liturgical visualization wherein they create a *tulpa* or thought-form double of themselves, offering the body freely as nourishment to demons, carrion-eaters, and gods in a tantric feast. This procedure is a mythological tracing of the actions of a previous incarnation of the Buddha who, observing a starved tigress about to eat her cubs in desperation, compassionately offers his own body as victual. Unflinchingly observing their own flesh being tortured and torn asunder by horrific and ravenous beings, the initiate penetrates through their *kleshas* (mental states which cloud and defile the mind) and grasps themselves in *rigpa*, the knowledge of the ground and reflexive source of all such projections of grace and fear. Here, the initiate foregrounds the congenital kinship among all beings in their emptiness and derivation from a single source of universal energy. Much like the practices of various indigenous shamans and shamanesses who project themselves to the limen or boundary through trance, uncovering spirits and a deluge of unconscious imagery to be placed in the service of healing, this work is undertaken not merely for the liberation of the individual but as a sacrifice or transpersonal dynamism which restores cosmic order, in other words, a remedial act for another person or a community. In this framework, the process of healing in mental, emotional, and physical registers seems to stem predominantly from delving past the fragmented surface and reconnecting the afflicted up to a grander and more harmonic scheme, mending the chasms of wounds through the appeals of sacrifice and mobilized coherence. From this perspective, the consciousness of the witness, being a

node in a panpsychic, omnijective circuit, is the ultimate subject of any esoteric ritual or encounter with a spiritual work. The disciplined efforts of the witness are an integral part of whether aspects of a work are illuminated and appear to participate in and demonstrate a living metaphysical and mythical reality, analogous somewhat to whether a reader remains fixated upon the surface content of a narrative's action or penetrates to its esoteric or symbolic teaching, always present but often folded steganographically into the formal aspect of its expression. As is the nature of resonance in the study of physics, a pattern of energy or information may only be effectively transferred over spatial distances between entities which are in a similar state of vibrational affinity, in terms of whole or partial aspects of their structures. So it is with the transmission of energies to and from the human complex, with the added caveat that the human is not rigidly determined by the influx of certain scales of influence but can willfully alter its tuning and receptivity to energies and therefore accelerate or remedy its station by opening portals of sympathy with the numberless marionettes of emptiness.

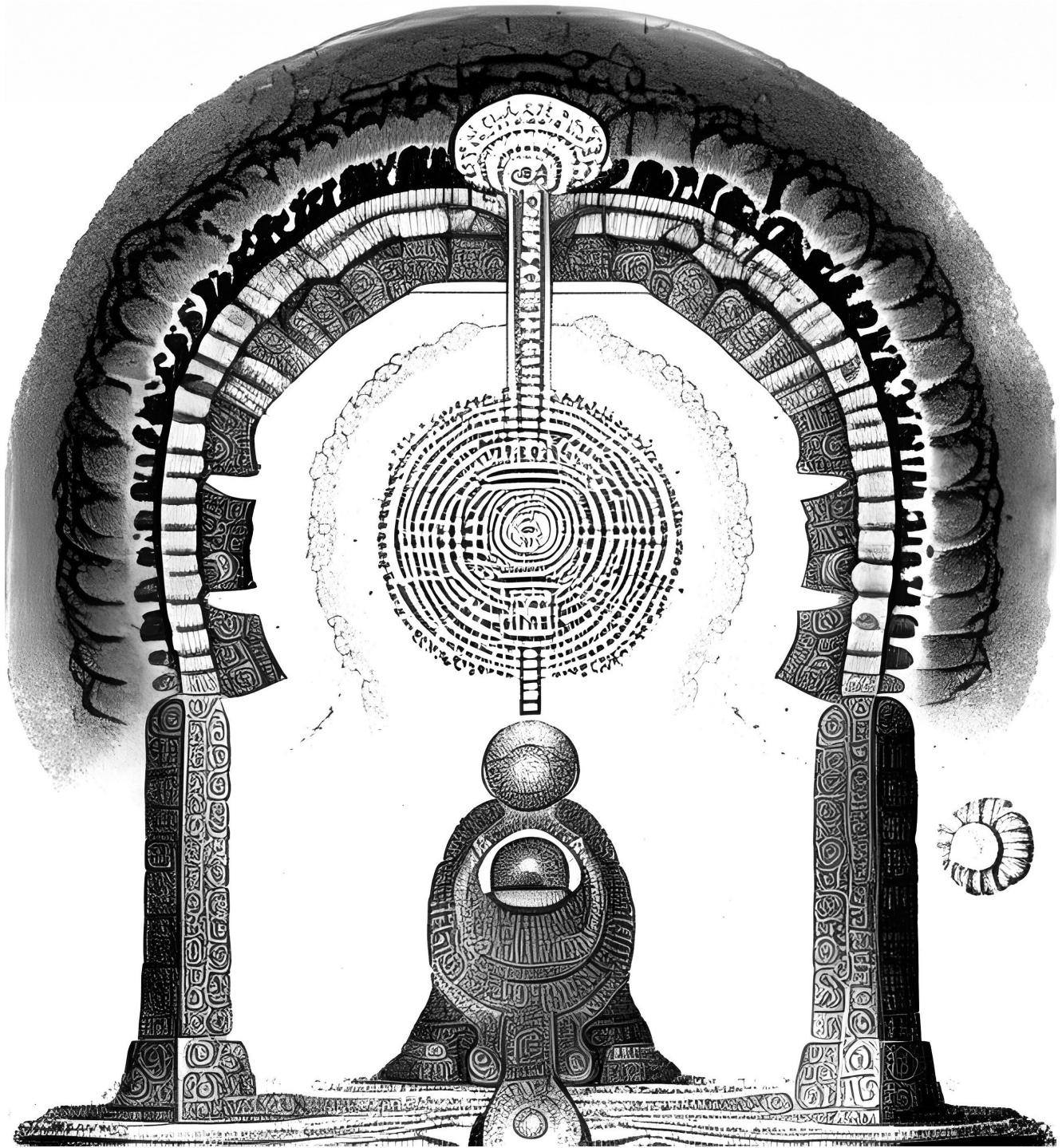
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Before they could approach the inner circle and master behind the mythological veil, neophytes of the ancient cult of Pythagoras were required to take a vow of extensive preparatory silence, a process named *echemythia*. This discipline and observance was doubtless enacted to fire and temper any deficiencies and excesses contained in the human personality, laying out a promontory of faith leading beyond the fragmentation of the individual to the heart of cosmic intuition. The restraint of speech is an operation aimed at the cultivation of virtue before the felt presence of the divine, a technique which imitates the silence and withdrawal of the gods who generate and sustain the world without taking part, and prevents the sully of mystery with the inane dribbles and unguarded approaches of the human tongue. The primitive and mysterious relationship between words, power, and existence (known as *heka*, or magic in Ancient Egypt, i.e. the perceptual axis wherein we witness the outward manifestation of vibrations or figments of inward concentration) is what produces fear in those pursuing *echemythic* silence for this confrontation is akin to death in that there is a quality of ceasing to be which accompanies the inner extinguishment of language and, for the Pythagoreans, it was a necessary rite of passage or rebirth before one is humbled, purified, and prepared for communion with Janus-faced wisdom. Just as extended immersion in darkness stimulates the visionary capacity and transmudane questing of the sage, a technique called *incubation* practiced in the hollow of caves by the *iatromantis* (physician-seer or poet-shaman) of Ancient Greece, the fever dream of long silence induces a state wherein one communes and dialogues with the unseen. Corpuscles of rare wisdom fall ready-formed into the mouth to be cast as formulas of eternity appropriate to the sentiments and vernacular of the living historical moment,

highly elusive energies from occulted realms projected in tapestries of vision are born in geometries of the tongue. We call this process of bypassing the culturally-conditioned personality to tap and surface the anonymous sources which engender it *echemythic transduction*. Its structure is what we understand to be tantric in that it inverts the sexually dimorphous pathway taken in the production of genetic multiplicity in order to more fully dwell in the intuition of the unitary seed which cannot be grasped by cerebral intelligence, functioning through comparison of difference alone as it does. Silent meditation enables *echemythic transduction* by comports subtle but real energy which is usually expended in the ordering function of language and anticipatory projection of reality into a heightened awareness and purification of the pattern or image-forming principal itself, the perceiver. Within the confines of such an understanding, *khôra*, like *mantra*, is a name of nothingness, expunged of meaning, functioning as an empty sound that emphasizes the vibratory field of material oscillations and makes life paradoxically profound by stilling the mind and collapsing beings into Being, the singular agent of all mutations. As a linguistic vibration, *khôra* must perpetually fall towards meaning which is its gravitational centre, and so it is simultaneously taken as a signpost of fecundation in the transit through and beyond the time-locked relativity of forms. *Khôra* serves the abyss between distinct, logical elements and is a charmed incantation which enters the realm of linguistic meaning to serve as a deputy of the meditation of silence, the reality of void, a reminder in language of what the habit of language often numbs us to — hieroglyphic resonance with enfolded dimensions of self and world. There is more than tongues can tell and the secret way of initiation(s), encapsulated here in the paradoxical nature of *khôra*, the darkness immersion of the *iatromantis*, and the *echemythia* of the Pythagoreans, endeavours to preserve the emotional weight of this immensity by seeking detours away from the limiting tether of language, enabling conceptual and non-conceptual strategies capable of piercing into the unity of the kingdoms of the unborn and deathless. The fixation upon and total surrender to mystery opens a clearing for ascent through the veils of negative existence, delivering consciousness from passable illusion amid the concourse of simulacra to its self-recursive ground in *rigpa*.

* * *

Any advanced initiatory process leads through some sequence of physical and/or psychical ordeals, trials of harrowing illness, extensive solitude, possession, or mediumship. These are summonings for the death of the shaman-artist to the world of everyday phenomena and entry into a more complex order of existence where their alliances with invisible confluences burgeon and their vocation may be wholly realized. It is through mastication of the shaman-artist's body in the mouth of unseen forces that they are ground to a spiritualized dust and freed from the constrictions of time and the mortal



body, opened to wisdom and guidance from other planes. After experiencing death symbolically, a new body is forged from the pulverized boneseed, a residue fashioned into a vehicle receptive of subtle energies and capable of transiting realms, cleansed of blockages and distortions accrued through aberrant personal or cultural practices. For the shaman-artist, destruction delivers instruction and in its surrender to a vaster scheme of forces, the body has become a message of the infinite and a magical threshold invoking the

Indian existential trinity of devoured (*anna* or *food*), devourer (*annada* or *eater of food*), and the act of devouring (*ananda* or *bliss*). Knowing that it is precisely the regularity of death, of our cells for example, which feeds the flame of life, the shaman-artist's very life form is cast in the archetypal shape of sacrifice. Depending on the tradition under consideration, the culmination of an individual's sacrifice to ancient spirits, the land, or their cultural group is frequently symbolized by the wearing of a sacred headdress that covers and distinguishes the crown of the skull. This ritual act, irrespective of specific tribal or cult affiliations, signifies the extinguishment of one's egoic will and the alignment of their life purpose with a natural function or the principle of cosmic fire. The pharaonic double crown, the *Pschent*, for example, depicted the *Uraeus* (rearing cobra *Wadjet*) and *Nekhbet* (the white vulture), known as the "Two Ladies". While not a physical, wearable crown, the *Pschent* was represented in Ancient Egyptian art and iconography and symbolized sovereign rule over the integrated expanse of the upper and lower kingdoms — both in geographical and mythical terms. The depicted zoomorphic deities were not merely ornamental but served to embody the functional attributes that braced this unified reign. Unfolded through long tracts of indigenous observance of the specific character of animal life, reptilian and avian iconography are clearly archaic and broad in cultural use, relevance, and nuance of symbolic meaning, but in the context of its significance upon the pharaonic *Pschent*, the cobra represents the taming of chaos, dominion over chthonic forces and the plane of the earth, rebirth through the shedding of skin, and something akin to proprioceptive vision, living among terrestrial forms with the preternatural keenness of vibratory perception traditionally attributed to the legless serpent. The white vulture is a creature whose sensitive feathers are susceptible to the downpour of celestial influence and represents acute wisdom rooted in a concatenated picture of the topography of a soul, the discerning vision of oneself from high above the mundane personality, soaring with a freedom and encircling protection. For the shaman-artist who resiliently passes through the tests and distresses of their particular mode of initiation and emerges as an intermediary or psychopomp with new aptitudes and perceptions forged in other worlds, the headdress, crown, or diadem, is representative of the displacement of individual desire, thought, and control associated with the cerebral mechanism of the brain and the surrender of the mind to a grander vision of reality's weave, reawakening telluric life to its cosmic significance as a reservoir of supernal wisdom and bringing spiritual and psychological worlds into functional alignment.

* * *

Traditionally, in a mythic tongue, the word is linked to genesis through vibration, the gaping mouth of void birthing time by unleashing the silent scream of space. But language is a mutinous stratum, and what is first extolled as the instrument of the creative

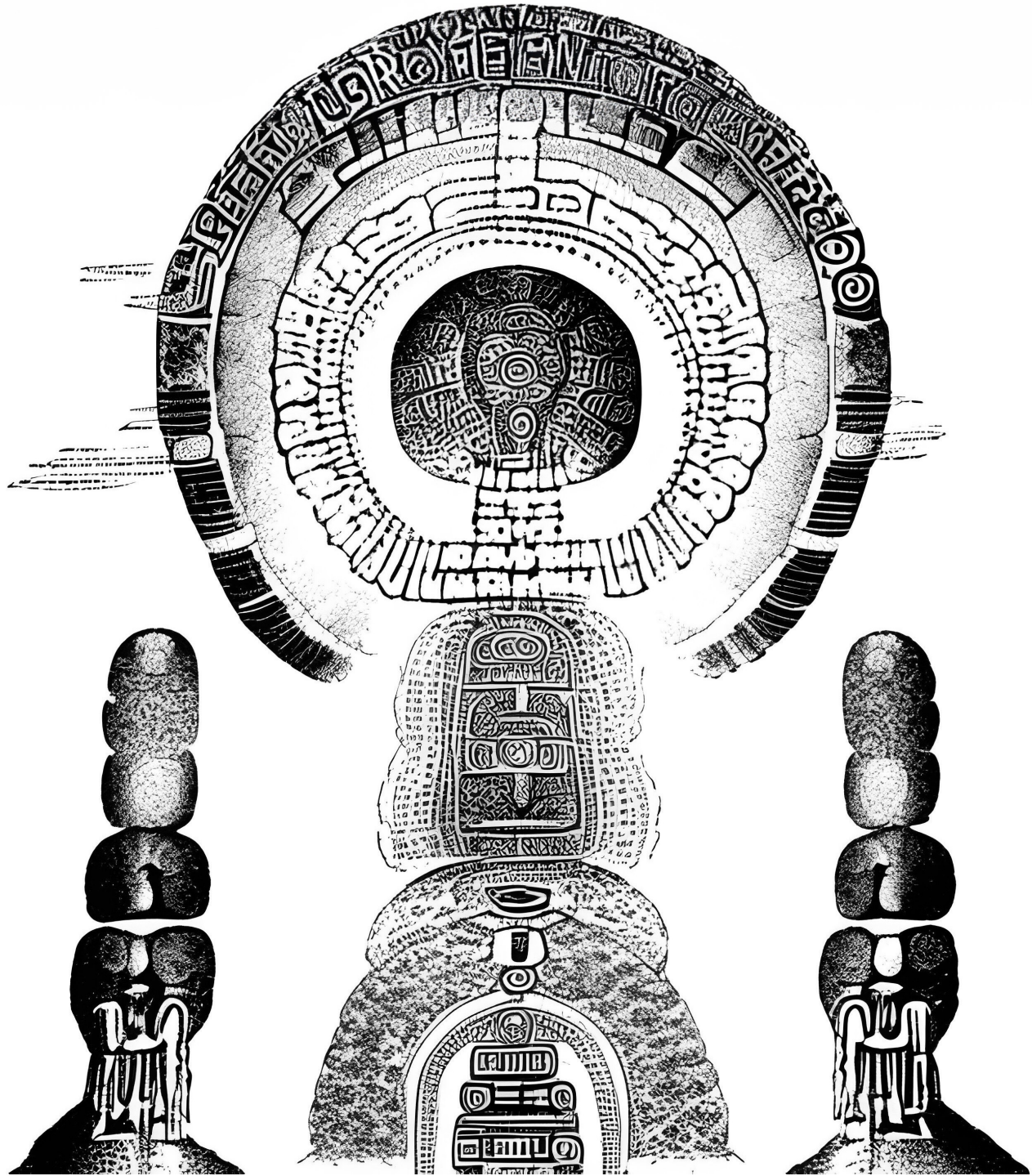
opening of worlds slowly transforms into a kind of blindness – with torpid political language, the word denotes the shrouding or overcoding of worlds, and with direct language, the word signifies the loss of many possible worlds and the salvaging of one actual. The virtualization of reality's infinite potencies in a language makes every choice of word a sacrifice, an act of devotion at the altar of our limits. The word is the threshold at which we surrender the unintelligible chaos of ever-dividing reality to the acuity of the name, discursive reduction and coherence at the price of immanence and transcendence. There is violence and mystery in this seizure by language – the word clutches the throat of madness so that the human in turn can breathe, just as our gestures of speech and writing are struggles to swathe in bandages the open wound of eternity which is the haemorrhage of formless virtuality into time. Language is a wholly preparatory and initiatic enterprise; under duress of the act of wording, the vacant poet-shaman stands before themselves as before the mystery of language, as before a mutant song requiring transcription, intertwining their essence with the immense tapestry and effulgence of the universe, recasting the act of origins by weaving worlds and expanding consciousness through glyph and utterance. Accosting subjects through resonant language, the shaman-poet disposes witnesses such that they are prepared for a revelation of an occulted aspect of their enfolded soul, appealing to the sundering and refiguring of the psychomaterial substrate operating consciously or unconsciously in them. The shaman-poet stands in the flaccid geometry of flesh as one stands on the precipice of infinite unravelling and desires to touch the world as an unassuming emissary of the void and thus reactivate its projective essence. The poetic word transfigures existences not by negation but through drawing focus to the halo of potentiality that surrounds beings. For the soul awakened to the seeking and creative dimension of its nature, its *conatus* or compulsion to persist in existing, the world is ever a shambles requesting clarity, stability, and expansion through the vibrations of language, for it is poetic reverie which rekindles the timbral and spectral depth of the drone of mundane life, motioning to resonances along poly-dimensional axes and in turn razing the old borderlands of identities sealed off from the untraced processes that engender them, exalting the preciousness, fragility, and evolutionary thrust of the manifest. By imposing distinctive rhythm and colour on its witness through the handling of force in the mold of words, poetry induces hypnotic affects and abstruse, subtle correspondence of meaning, retaining a native capacity to trigger conceptual short-circuits and revectorize sense through expanding the imagistic and emotional blueprint of the real, refiguring existential moods and elemental qualities into a radical love, patience, and compassion for existence which can orient acts of passive consumption toward acts of vulnerable clarification. The unguarded heart of the shaman-poet desires a text with a savage presence which pushes the body from the edge of language into the groundless fall of ineffability.

* * *

Language constellates new realms of phenomena and meaning while prismatically decoding the elements of a living mystery. Each symbol of a language, forged and unfolded under particular emotional and psychical aspects, opens polyhedral worlds and simultaneously instantiates a conceptual trench marking an individual's turbulent evolution through a vibratory pattern, akin to wading into a cymatic sea or transiting a Chladni plate where the variable frequency injected into a system alters the fundamental shape of its vibrational modes. What is at stake in language and essentially constitutes its political and mystical dimensions is the very nature of perception itself, a display of what kinds of information and experience are esteemed, represented, and anticipated in the flowing difference of reality-as-movement. This is not meant only with respect to the content of language but also in connection to form, tempo, and rhythm as dimensional carriers of information. The singular nature of our relationship to language is where we disclose our revolt against stagnation and the originality of our perception and thought. To be an *original* thinker does not merely indicate the glorification of rampant individualistic expression but rather signifies *engagement with thought precisely at the ever-present origin of creation, a liminal state where beginning and end coincide and one stands in a form of awareness that circumvents time's linearity*. Entering a state where one's language and thought represents the living frontier of genesis so as to smuggle the enigma and transparency of this event back into the opaque field of culture is the act which is unique and thus originating. The acorn unfolds the oak and the spear begets the wound in the space of an evanescent present; the end will not be in the future nor was the beginning in the past as both root and terminus constitute themselves in clandestine dimensions of an impregnable now, lurking in the voiceless rift between thought and words.

* * *

In its conventional aspect, observing the subject and object of grammatical construction, language seems to operate under a putative capacity to encapsulate or contain information without also propagating it in the act of expression, although it is in reality not free from the influence of its own epigenetic rhythm. As it ventures to express or give shape to a reality, language is displaced in the flow of time and performs a novel action, adding cymatic layers of perception to the complexes and conditions of meaning, producing further causal disturbances which cannot be accounted for in the spatiotemporal situation the original expression attempted to "capture" or resonate with. This is somewhat analogous to what we see in the quantum realm where the very act of measurement has a similar effect on the perceived state of a system as our cast of language on our sense of reality. In their intercessions with the gauze of phenomena, both



conventional language and instrumental perception or measurement tend to conceal the virtuality of the real that perpetually haunts the gap between expression and expressed. The senses, in conjunction with language and creative imagination, hunt realities from their virtuality into paths of actual becoming, summoning the imaginal into the vocabulary of events. What is always remaindered as a surplus and can never become entangled in webs of expression however is the ever-cresting wave of the virtual itself, the transformation of

the freedom of light into the fixed opacity of a world. The coherent beam of silent meditation, producing an unshakeable, single-pointedness of focus, is capable of undoing the solidity of the world, of betraying its transparencies, overlaps, and interpenetrations by censoring incursions into the mindstream from the inputs of the senses and from mental impressions lurking in the unconscious, placing us before the naked and eternal radiating source. Once we ascend the spiralling staircase of the soul and touch the silence of coruscating mystery, we can only return to conventional language as an exile or ghost, all our expressions haunted and estranged by convoluted reverberations born of the magical emptiness and poetic co-implication of things. In this broad and meandering reflection upon the loose notion of conventional language, it will perhaps be of some value to briefly touch upon the occasional evocation of the words “spirit” and “soul” in this text, terms whose conventional meanings are often somewhat incoherent or distorted. While these terms will undoubtedly be viewed as triflingly abstract, obtuse, or irredeemably meaningless for some readers, they can be understood concretely and with utmost ease in relation to the *tria prima* (three primes) of the Paracelsian alchemist, wherein spirit (*mercury*), soul (*sulphur*), and body (*salt*) are viewed as the foundational principles of manifest substance. For the renaissance alchemist, spirit is unitary and volatile and partakes of the *generalized movement of nature*, its life-giving principle of animation or mercurial quality. Soul refers to that which endures burning, the emotional desire or *singular essence* of something. While body naturally relates to reduction to physical substance. Burning a piece of wood as illustration, the fire itself was said to be the work of sulphur, the smoke was the volatile mercury, and the ash was the enduring salt. A brief glance to the plant kingdom will help to further clarify and image this trinity of aspects — plant alcohol, or ethanol, is called spirit because it is the same for any type of plant and thus expresses the universal or generalized principle of plants; the unique essence of a specific plant, its soul or unmistakable fragrance, is discovered in the distillation of its essential oil (think of the patent aromas of specific flowers or fruits); the enduring or fixed body of the plant is associated with the salt extracted from ashes remaindered by organic forms which have undergone combustion. In certain esoteric lineages of the hermetic and alchemical tradition, the fixed salt is understood as that substance which occupies the threshold between eternity and transience and bears the continuing evolution of consciousness through non-genetic means. Trembling with the untracked but unique and subtle vibratory information of a specific embodiment (said to be stored in the human femur bone), the remaindered salt reenters the humus of the earth and subsequently passes to the bodies of plants, animals, and humans, calling forth and relinking with a particular dimension of the animating and volatile spirit which it “fixes” through harmonic affinity, gestating the amplitude and fire of a new soul.

* * *

Within the sprawling lea of interlocution, an unspoken, compulsive anxiety existing between users of a language to reach a patent resolution, a safe and incontrovertible end point, obstructs the entities involved from rendering anything outside the sphere of recognition, a species of tokenism which defines the glib and flippant shape of consensus reality. There is an act of loving balance between cerebral intelligence and the pneumatic intuitions of the heart that being alive demands of us such that we avoid becoming petrified, remaining ideologically sheltered from potentials of transcendence on the one hand, or naively prone to disorientation or manipulation through phantasmic process in the realms of emotional flux on the other. For those in a position of detached sympathy with its tireless dispatch of signatures, the behest of the future is cast into the vorticular present, built onto a gnomonic past with nested strata of progressive complexity. Will you throw yourself into the delirium of time's mouth, be ground beneath the inexorable rhythmic action of its teeth, incant impossible visions from out the resonant hollow of its throat, make the invisible tractable for yourself as for others?

* * *

Protracted intervals of seclusion facilitate the hermit-artist's function through circumscription of a zone of temporal abeyance or free time which reaccomplishes the sacrality and impenetrability of origins. The hermetic artist is an individual who has withdrawn themselves from the tacit and encumbering assumptions of their tribe and, through addressing focused attention to the perception which cradles their experience, plunges willingly into a spectral void. In that teeming emptiness of light, they observe their own pulse as sole commandment, forsaking any esteem imparted to knowledge by civilization and yet gnostically convinced that they know their own life and the evolution of the cosmos made conscious through it. The hermit-artist is not subject to the illusions of idealism but to the logic of dream, and their values, vision, and desire emanate from this truth. The quality of the hermit native to the shaman-artist does not merely imply one who is introverted or socially reclusive: amidst the turbulence of company or prismatically decoded under the penetrating light of intimacy, the shaman-artist remains within the sphere of isolation, for their solitude is not contingent upon place but is a locus they bear within themselves. The hermit's solitude grows to become so vital and expansive that it wholly envelops them and at first constitutes an irreparable gap between their life and that of their society. As it intensifies, the initiatic solitude balloons to encapsulate community, world, and universe, and at this point, drunk on the enchantments of visionary madness and hyper-sensitivity from attenuated inputs, the hermit-artist achieves continuity with Being and gazes at the entire universe as a figment of their own reckoning and extension of themselves, steadied in false grandeur by subservience to deep listening and accurate registration of nature's ways which open onto a truth that is not solipsistic but ecological,

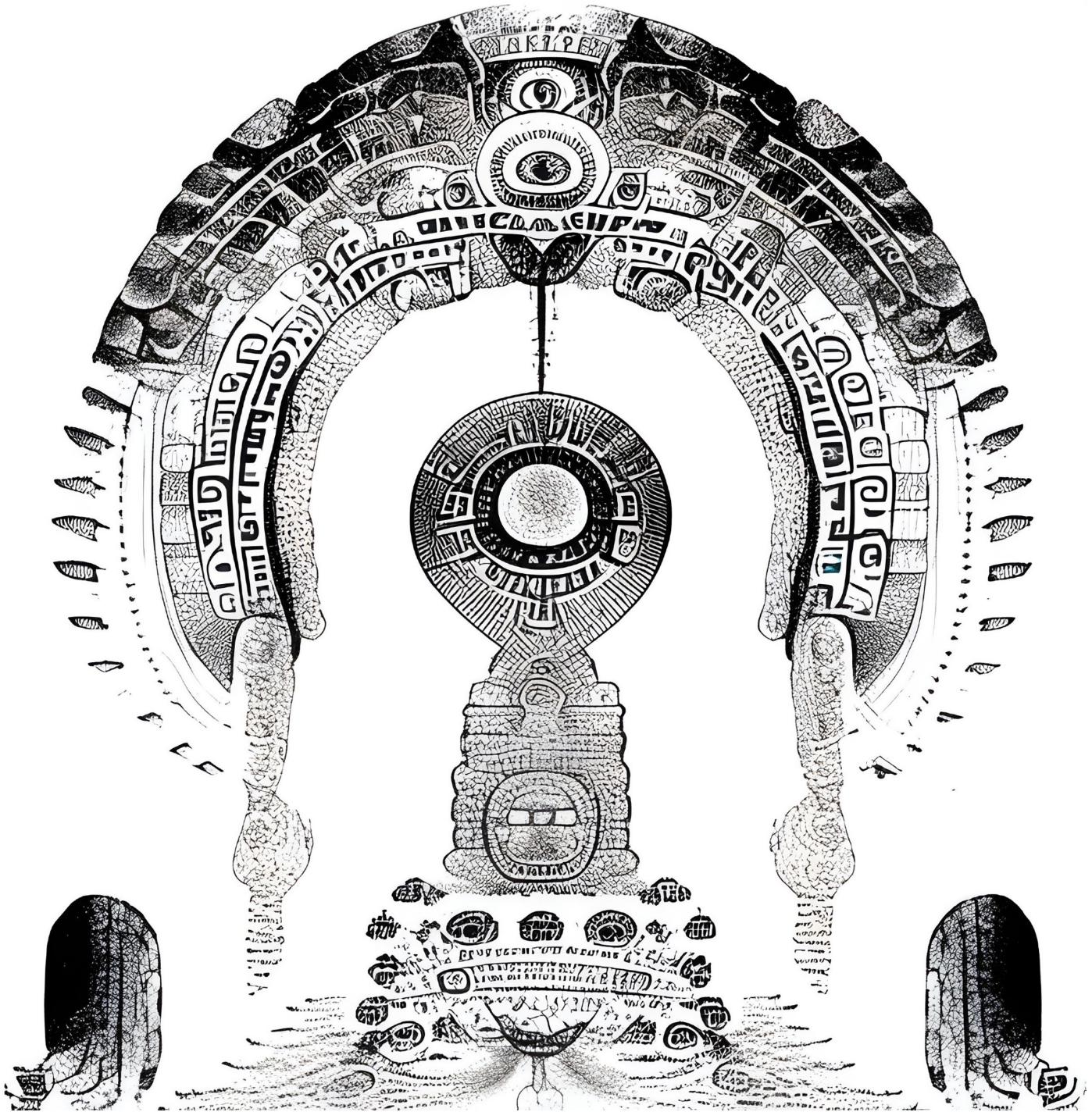
the truth of *emmeshment*. The timeless zone of isolation that the hermetic artist inhabits is saturated with morphic residues of contact with altered and contiguous realities, for the artist's true solitude inheres in their learning to perceive, through the clarity and rawness of embodiment, the beyond of their incarnation. At great remove from the human world, the mystical hermit nurtures the transparency and audacity to faintly whisper "I am you".

* * *

While the specifics of its psychological and emotional contents are sure to be highly variable, any experience of an altered state of consciousness - those associated with trance, ritual, hypnosis, exhaustion, psychotropics, near-death, religious or sexual ecstasy, acute trauma, lucid dream, the list is far from exhaustive - which elicits one to thoroughly reevaluate expectations concerning the limitations and nature of reality, ultimately extends an invitation to the personality to pass through the abstract veil of tacit assumptions and the foregrounded convolutions of thought used to insulate a stable world-image and consciously reenter into the presence of the *love-wonder* constituting the emanations of the matrix of being. Listening past the squall of ego prattle to witness the nested and interdependent hierarchies of force informing cosmic individuality places consciousness in congruence with elemental and transterrestrial vision, courting a vantage that transits the continuum of timescales and realms. Here, like weight into water, poetic language is displaced from the souls' wellspring by the power of vision, called forth as a devotional shrine to silence's unnamable beckoning. Transforming or escaping the confining cell of the egoic personality, if only as a testament to its possibility, is a routine spiritual axiom but is no meagre task and requires the transmutation of aspects of ruminative intellection and positional understanding into the more subtle and henotic virtues of empathy and agape, betokening a trust in what may lie beyond the gulf of the self. The terrain of the mind is a minefield of contrivances and deceptions, a chorus of foolers and fooled, phantoms and echoes of unresolved and unharmonized emotions and logics stifling advancements towards the impersonal, so this metamorphosis cannot be made on the plane of rational intelligence for it is not merely a question of rearranging or resynthesizing accumulated sensory impressions and hoarded conclusions about reality, but rather concerns surrendering aspects of life with which we are most tenaciously identified and sailing toward the felt warmth of the inner silent sun on a barque of unexplained faith.

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In the imagistic metaphor of *Indra's Net* - an infinitely large web with multi-faceted jewels at its vertices each of which mirrors all of the other jewels in an endless interfusion



of reflections - we have a framework for an unspoken fraternity with all being through the vector of emptiness. A mystic's immersion in this net of empty reflections places them in a position to elevate life with such compassion and clarity and, from the point of view of the ego's tenacious pride, negate it with such caprice and detachment that there can be no resting place for an opinion of their character. For the mystic, being a willing fool and jester of perception amidst vast ignorance, knows that thought and opinion transpire upon

an interminable plane of trap doors, intentionally or arbitrarily marrying abstracted contents with emotional charges, so the heart must become an instrument for tuning the mind if stabilization and delicate immersion into the wisdom of Indra's Net is to occur. Lost in a desert of labyrinthine thought, the wind erasing all references, the throbbing energy of the swelling heart lights the numberless reflective grains in slow, lush pulses and, in an unmistakable moment of lambent mystery, the desert of reasoning becomes a mirage inside an oasis of unthinkable meaning; the stirrings of the mind are laid to rest and all being sings in univocal silence. It is through denaturalization of our relationship to our senses that we become privy to the mystical and this, in part, is what makes yogic practices simultaneously existential and metaphysical – they don't engage mind as a separate domain which can be manipulated by instruction or altered through obscure belief. Rather, mental activity is seen as existentially continuous with the phenomena of the body and so, for the mind to achieve stillness, clarity, and identity with cosmic fire, that is, to go beyond nature and mortality, the body must learn to defy its most habitual inclinations toward frenetic movement and an unremitting stream of thought through the techniques of meditation, suspended breathing, and unwavering focus. For the yogi pursuing *jivanmukti*, liberation or enlightenment in the present lifetime, thought must be subdued and the body must become a diamond vessel transparent to the infinite, clearing away the residues of ever-morphing personae invented by the psyche which veil the ultimate, bearing personal energy in the womb of cosmic energy. It is of little import whether we identify with a body or a mind; what is integral for transmission of wisdom and learning is that we bind and thus overstep the apparent dualities of body and mind, self and all, becoming an unbounded manifold or continuous surface which betrays neither inside nor outside and fosters accurate, transparent perception which is inseparable from divine understanding. The means of tactfully and experimentally exploring this station are many but one of the most dependable and appealing to modern culture would be to alter consciousness and modulate our relationship to the activities of our sensorium as a preliminary proof to the skeptical mind of adjacent constellations of perceptual reality. This can be achieved, for instance, by intentionally quieting the senses that inform our embodied construction of the world, aiming to attain a guileless approach to eternity through the gateless gate of a diaphanous moment. With respect to vision, a practice as simple as rubbing closed eyes with the hands and bearing witness to the phosphenes remaindered is already the innocent beginning of a probing nature which uncovers the source of the universe balanced between awareness and expression. By suppressing the eye's access to the light that first called its function forth into the dream of existence and manually stimulating ganglion cells in the retina to displace the sensation of light from its usual source, we tether to the nature of experience as it manifests and cultivates itself from within. Similarly, according to the theoretical accounts of certain lamas, the instrumental elements used in the sacred ritual music of Tibet - horns fashioned from human femur bones, skin-stretched hourglass-shaped drums constructed of fused skulls, conches,

resonant bells, metallic cymbals - are designed to imitate the sounds of the body as they are heard when one plugs the ears with the fingers amid the intense concentration of meditation, harvesting the tremblings of the depths and forging them into ritualistic practices to remain in proximity to their profound resonance. The seemingly macabre nature of some of the instruments used to produce the ritual musics which aid monks in meditation, symbolically and vibrationally construct a promontory into the bardo plane (the intermediary station and journey between lives as described in the *Bardo Thodol* or "Liberation through hearing during the intermediate state", familiar to the West as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*) as a practice and preparation for recognizing and transcending the visions and confusions that emerge in the inevitable confrontation with death. This tradition is clearly guided by the fearless, conscious identification of the body with the cosmos as a realization of the reconciliation of opposites, placing initiates into the cradled hands of the ever-lasting void where life and death interlace in non-duality.

* * *

Chaos is the name of the yawn which awakens creation into evolving forms and sets the mind to dream, the gaping chasm and issuance of vibratory seed sounding out the polarized voyage through manifestation. The yawn, sound of both torpor and arousal, is fixed at the ambiguous root of creation, for the universe of matter is an expression of the exhaust of light just as it is a rousing of latent emptiness into pattern, contortions of imperishable fire slowed to conform to the gravity of perception, a lucid cosmic reverie captured by black hole eyes. It is through an unnameable desire seizing the void that nothing gives place to something and the transpersonal self enters the labyrinth of our human situation, at once oneiric and concrete. This situation is what Joseph Rael (*Beautiful Painted Arrow*) has called "the house of shattering light"; the ineffable, rhythmically adorning itself in cascades of energy, densities of perception, and the sundry shapes of embodied lives is ever shattered to be reopened to the permanent evolution of mystery. The words and concepts that again and again arise upon the naming of origin - void, light, chaos, order, and the unshakeable mystery of being - can become tactile elements for us, even as they are perpetually remote in their mythic and axiomatic form. When we alight from the carousel of our enduring worlds of habit and knowledge and begin to feast on the vastness of our ignorance and freedom, we see that all our stagnant conceptions and all fear of an otherness are only anxious stirrings begotten of our limited energy and narrow band of reception. A comprehensive image of the entire cosmos is ingrained holographically in every part, no matter how small or fragmented, and thus it is possible to explore and achieve degrees of gnosis with respect to any element solely through the dim or blurred perception of ourselves. By eschewing the endless decomposition of phenomena by a cerebral analysis which is incapable of arriving at the insoluble mystery of self-aware,

energetic presence and only surfaces a parade of subjects and things, and through engaging existence as a living mythology which collapses the tumults of time into the stillness of eternity, we are reborn in our hearts to *apeiron* (the unlimited, indefinite), grasping limitlessness not as a tiresome, metaphysical solace or delusional, psychological crutch for fragile humanity sheltering itself from the intricacies of life, inevitability of suffering, and juncture of death but rather as the radiant and invincible seat of *dreaming-being*.

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